

The Chat

Vol. 80

WINTER 2016

No. 1



The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Vol. 80

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THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612. Individual subscription price \$25 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Pinehurst, NC and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE CHAT, Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst NC 28374.

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2015 Spring Bird Counts in South Carolina

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Seven spring migration counts were conducted in South Carolina from April 26 to May 16. The 151 participants in the field and 22 at feeders reported 223 species, tying last year's high count. Overall there were 30 species of warblers reported, a new high for the count (28 reported in 2012), 17 species of waterfowl and 25 species of shorebirds.

As usual, the two coastal counts had the highest species totals with 165 at Charleston/Berkeley and 143 at Jasper. The Greenville count set a new record for species total for their spring count with 135, including 30 species of warblers. The Aiken count tied their high species count. Additional highlights for each of the counts are provided by the count compilers below.

Compilers' Comments

Greenville County: April 26 (*one area covered on April 25*), 135 species, 5296 individuals

Coordinator: Paul Serridge

4 Audrey Lane
Greenville, SC 29615

Participants: Derek Aldrich, Shelby Birch, Jeff Click, Donnie Coody, Don Cox, Steve Cox, Denise Dupon, Laura Eison, Matthew Eison, Don Faulkner, Chip Gilbert, Simon Harvey, J.B. Hines, Valerie Hollinger, Jerry Johnson, Len Kopka, Jane Kramer, Yves Limpalair, Cynthia Lenhart, Anthony Martin, Eric McFalls, Michael Oliver, Chris Peak, Austen Pickhardt, Merikay Pirrone, Abbey Quinn, Courtney Quinn, John Quinn, Barbara Serridge, Paul Serridge, Dennis Trapp, Judith Webb

Thirty-two birders participated in the 2015 Greenville County Spring Migration Count: 24 GCBC members and 8 non-members. Three of the non-members actually led area counts. Unfortunately, there were very few reports from backyard feeders. We can do better in that regard in future.

Together we listed 135 species and 5296 individual birds. The 135 species breaks the previous record of 129 set in 2012 and then equaled in 2014. Although most of the areas previously covered were birded this year we missed out on several areas including Paris Mountain SP, the Mountain

Bridge Wilderness Area (Caesar's Head, Jones Gap SP etc.) and Moonville / Prince Lake.

We benefited from excellent birding weather all over the county – moderate temperatures, little to no wind, partly cloudy skies, and no rain.

Bird highlights:

The following were new additions to the total Spring Counts list, bringing the total species reported during Spring Migration Counts since 2005 to 174:

Northern Shoveler (Furman U.)

Hooded Merganser (Hwy 14 and Hwy 11 area)

Bonaparte's Gull (Wilson's Farm)

Spartanburg County: May 9, 116 species, 4148 individuals

Coordinator: Lyle Campbell

126 Greengate Lane

Spartanburg, SC 29307

Participants: Doug Allen, Judy Allen, Marlyn Broome, Tom Broome, Tim Brown, Dan Bryant, David Campbell, Lyle Campbell, Sarah Campbell, Timothy Campbell, Dan Codispoti, Cheryl Cooksey, Ed Elam, Kathleen Elam, Simon Harvey, J. B. Hines, Jane Houston, Jerry Johnson, Jeanette Keepers, Moss Miller, Joe Mitchell, Roberta Mitchell, Nora Moore, Nancy Odum, Amy Coker Pascoe, Robert Powell, Doug Rayner, Jon Storm, Melissa Storm, Kristen Taylor

The Spartanburg 2015 Spring Count found a respectable 116 species. And our warbler count was 16 species. Best birds were a Mississippi Kite and a Lincoln's Sparrow. We had a reduced number of counters, field and feeder, this year.

Cherokee County: May 16, 86 species, 1279 individuals

Coordinator: Lyle Campbell

126 Greengate Lane

Spartanburg, SC 29307

Participants: David Campbell, Lyle Campbell, Sarah Campbell, Timothy Campbell, Claude Cobb, J. B. Hines, Karla Lavender

The Cherokee 2015 Spring Count was low on participants, but still found 86 species. Our warbler count was 10 species.

Aiken County: May 2, 124 species, 3557 individuals

Coordinator: Anne Waters
1621 Apple Valley Drive
Augusta, GA 30906

Participants: Carol Eldridge, Larry Eldridge, Carl Huffman, Paul Koehler, Willie Malpass, George Reeves, Lois Stacey, Peter Stangel, Anne Waters, Alice Walker, Douglas Walker, Kathleen Wallis, Calvin Zippler

A Spring Migration count was held May 2 in Aiken County. Thirteen people participated and we had a count of 124 species. This ties the all-time record!

Warblers were well represented this year with 21 species with 158 Northern Parulas among the count. There were also 3 Swainson's Warblers counted which is a good count and not a species we get often. The most amazing part was a count of 211 Mississippi Kites over various fields! Nocturnal counts were good with 5 Eastern Screech Owls, 4 Great Horned Owls, 9 Barred Owls, 21 Chuck-will's-widows and 4 Eastern Whip-poor-wills.

Congaree National Park: May 5, 81 species, 441 individuals

Coordinator: John Grego

Participants: John Cely, Caroline Eastman, John Grego, Jerry Griggs, Kathleen O'Grady, Donna Slyce and 22 other Robin Carter Dawn Chorus Walk attendees

A Spring Bird Count was held May 5 at Congaree National Park. Donna Slyce led a group of 26 participants on the Robin Carter Dawn Chorus Walk in the morning, while another group covered the Boardwalk later in the morning, and a third group covered the eastern end of the park through the early afternoon. A total of 81 species were seen, including 15 warbler species. Migrants included a Chestnut-sided Warbler in the parking lot and thrushes in the woods near the shore of Bates Old River. On three separate occasions, we observed flocks of 20 or more Anhinga soaring above the floodplain along the US 601 causeway, with the largest flock numbering over 50 birds.

Charleston/Berkeley Counties: May 3, 165 species, 13,478 individuals

Coordinator: Andy Harrison
35 Cross Creek Drive, Apt P-7
Charleston, SC 29412

Participants: Dorice and Peter Bernard, Ed Blitch, Dennis and Lynn Burnette, David and Camille Chamberlain, Wil Christenson, George Cromartie, Hal Currey, Chris Davies,

Edouard des Francs, Connie Drew, Judy Fairchild, Pam Ford, Dennis Forsythe, Aaron Given, Stan Gorlitsky, Andy Harrison, Richard Hayes, E. Starr Hazard III, Matt Johnson, Don and Lois Jones, Pete Laurie, Patrick Markham, Mary-Catherine Martin, Keith McCullough, David C. McLean Jr., Cathy and Carl Miller, Paul Nolan, Perry Nugent, Thomas J. Riley, Allen Russell, Peggy Schachte, Joel Thompson, Ann Truesdale, Jennifer Tyrrell, Monty Wallace, Craig Watson, and Kathy Woolsey

The 2015 Charleston Spring Bird Count was held on May 3, 2015. There were 42 participants divided into 19 parties, who tallied 100.75 hours in the field. We observed 165 total species and 13,478 individuals (for a bird/party hour average of 133.8).

Once again the weather was quite favorable for the count, with clear skies and no precipitation. Temperatures ranged from a pre-dawn low of about 55 degrees F to an afternoon high of about 79 F. The species and individual totals both exceeded the 9-year averages of 150 and 9026, respectively. We fielded parties in 13 areas this year, including Fairlawn Plantation (for the third year in a row) and the Intracoastal Waterway. As in 2014, we recorded a number of lingering winter species (notably scoters and other ducks), and we also did very well with shorebirds, seabirds and some songbirds (particularly warblers). There were several species observations that were new to the count since I took over as compiler in 2006, including Northern Shoveler, Black-bellied Whistling-Duck, Black Rail, Long-billed Dowitcher and Chestnut-sided Warbler.

Birders in the Capers, Dewees and both North and South Bulls Island parties reported seeing Black Scoters (159 total), and the South Bulls party observed a Surf Scoter (supporting details provided for all of these sightings). Small numbers of Blue-winged Teal (67 total), 2 Bufflehead, 1 Hooded Merganser, 5 Red-breasted Mergansers, 2 Northern Shovelers and an American Wigeon were also recorded on the count. Among the shorebirds, we recorded 1571 Semipalmated Plovers (9-year average 761), 106 Black-necked Stilts (26.3), 146 Greater Yellowlegs (30.8), 348 Lesser Yellowlegs (19.1), 371 Red Knots (134.4), 279 of which were observed on the Intracoastal Waterway, 274 Sanderlings (57.2), 140 Semipalmated Sandpipers (66.1), and 622 Short-billed Dowitchers (312.2). We also recorded 637 Black Skimmers (323.3), 350 of which were observed on Capers Island. Finally, among the songbirds we observed more warbler species this year (18) than in any other year since I became compiler (next highest total 17 in 2013). Several of these observations were of single birds, but there were also some high totals, including: 188 Northern Parulas (97.7), 9 Black-and-white Warblers (1.9), 8 Worm-eating Warblers (1.2), and 78 Common Yellowthroats (39.7). One group where we fared poorly again this year was the swallows (except for Purple Martins), as we recorded only 6

Tree Swallows (371.7), 21 Northern Rough-winged Swallows (34.2), and 127 Barn Swallows (175.4).

Some of the area highlights on this year's count included:

In the North Bulls area, Mary-Catherine Martin and her group (Keith McCullough and Tom Riley) observed 9 Least Bitterns, 24 Mottled Ducks, 2 Northern Shovelers, 1 American Wigeon, 2 Black Scoters, 1 Red-breasted Merganser, 1 Northern Harrier, 1 Sora, 1 Piping Plover, 90 Black-necked Stilts, 3 Bonaparte's Gulls, 1 Northern Flicker, 1 Swamp Sparrow (Keith McCullough provided good details on this somewhat late bird and also the scoters), and 13 Bobolinks.

David McLean and his party (Wil Christenson and Starr Hazard) had an excellent day in the South Bulls area. They observed 2 Pied-billed Grebes, 1 American Bittern (Starr Hazard provided details on this heard bird), 14 Least Bitterns, 7 Black-bellied Whistling Ducks (Wil Christenson provided photos), 14 Mottled Ducks, 150 Black Scoters, 1 Surf Scoter, 1 Black Rail, and 2 Chipping Sparrows. David McLean provided convincing details on the Black Rail and the scoters in his eBird report for the count. About one year ago (May 30, 2014), he was the first person to report an observation of Black-bellied Whistling Ducks on Bulls Island to eBird. To my knowledge this is the first time that Black Rail or Black-bellied Whistling Ducks have ever been recorded on a Charleston Spring Count.

On Capers Island, Hal Currey and his party (Chris Davies, Richard Hayes and Peggy Schacte) observed 1 Common Loon, 5 Black Scoters, 1 Red-breasted Merganser, 6 Bald Eagles, 1 Great Black-backed Gull, 6 Gull-billed Terns, 350 Black Skimmers, 1 Blackpoll Warbler (Chris Davies provided details on this bird and the scoters), 19 Painted Buntings, and 3 Seaside Sparrows.

Kathy Woolsey and Ann Truesdale co-led the Laurel Hill party (including Dorice and Peter Bernard) this year. Kathy usually leads this group, but she had to leave in late morning to assist with an event on the Yorktown, and so Ann took over at that point and submitted the final checklist. They observed 11 Wood Ducks, 3 Mallards, and the only 3 House Sparrows reported on the count.

In Cainhoy, Andy Harrison and George Cromartie observed 1 Broad-winged Hawk, 8 Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, 1 Northern Flicker, 1 Black-throated Blue Warbler, 3 Worm-eating Warblers, 1 Swainson's Warbler, and 1 Kentucky Warbler.

In the Sewee Road area, Jen Tyrrell and Ed Blich observed 4 Swallow-tailed Kites, 6 Mississippi Kites, 22 American Oystercatchers, 5 Black-necked Stilts, and 3 Bobolinks during the regular count. During pre-dawn owling here, Dennis Forsythe recorded 4 Eastern Screech Owls, 1 Barred Owl, 21 Chuck-will's-widows, and 8 Yellow-breasted Chats.

Perry Nugent and his party (Allen Russell and Joel Thompson) observed 1 Swallow-tailed Kite, 12 Northern Bobwhites, 8 Ruby-throated

Hummingbirds, 3 Red-headed Woodpeckers, 4 Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, 1 American Robin, 3 Worm-eating Warblers and 2 Bachman's Sparrows in the Ion Swamp area. During pre-dawn owling they added 1 Eastern Screech Owl, 12 Barred Owls and 3 Chuck-will's-widows.

In the Porcher's Bluff area, Craig Watson and his group (Pam Ford and Stan Gorlitsky) observed 1 Bufflehead, 8 Mississippi Kites, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 5 Black-necked Stilts, 42 Spotted Sandpipers, 45 Whimbrel, 3 Long-billed Dowitchers (Craig Watson supplied details on plumage and vocalization for these birds), 1 Common Tern, 5 Marsh Wrens, 5 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 2 Worm-eating Warblers, 1 Northern Waterthrush, and 1 Scarlet Tanager.

In the Guerin's Bridge Road area, Don Jones and his party (Lois Jones and Patrick Markham) observed 1 Glossy Ibis, 1 Swallow-tailed Kite, 5 Mississippi Kites, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 2 Loggerhead Shrikes, and 1 Chestnut-sided Warbler (singing bird heard by Patrick Markham, who provided supporting details).

David Chamberlain and his party (Camille Chamberlain and Edouard des Francs) observed 12 Wood Ducks, 3 Wild Turkeys, 6 Acadian Flycatchers, 1 Yellow-throated Vireo, and 1 Kentucky Warbler in Fairlawn Plantation.

Cathy Miller and her group (Connie Drew, Judy Fairchild, Aaron Given, Matt Johnson, Pete Laurie, and Carl Miller) had another superb day on Dewees Island, finishing with 108 species. While they birded together for some of the time, they also split up into three parties during most of the day to better cover the island. They observed 1 Pied-billed Grebe, 3 Least Bitterns, 7 Mottled Ducks, 2 Black Scoters (Aaron Given provided details), 1 Bufflehead, 1 Hooded Merganser, 3 Red-breasted Mergansers, 6 Black-necked Stilts, 17 Western Sandpipers, 1 Bonaparte's Gull, 74 Sandwich Terns, 1 Common Tern, 4 Common Ground-Doves, 1 Common Nighthawk, 5 Tree Swallows, 1 Veery, 1 Yellow Warbler, 1 Black-throated Blue Warbler, 2 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 48 Painted Buntings, 1 Seaside Sparrow, 1 White-throated Sparrow, and 25 Bobolinks. In early morning birding Judy Fairchild added 3 Chuck-will's-widows to the area total.

In the Airport area, Dennis Forsythe and his party (Dennis and Lynn Burnette) observed 1 Broad-winged Hawk, 5 Chimney Swifts and 13 House Finches. In early morning birding (after finishing his owling along Sewee Road) Dennis Forsythe added 1 Chuck-will's-widow and a number of diurnal species to the area total.

Finally, on the Intracoastal Waterway, Monty Wallace and Paul Nolan observed 1 Common Loon, 1 Pied-billed Grebe, 30 Wilson's Plovers, 51 Whimbrel, 279 Red Knots, 106 Purple Martins, and 16 Northern Rough-winged Swallows.

Notable misses this year included: Horned Grebe, Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Peregrine Falcon, King Rail, Marbled Godwit, Black Tern, Rock Pigeon, Great Horned Owl, Belted Kingfisher, White-breasted Nuthatch, Cedar Waxwing and Eastern Meadowlark.

It’s hard to believe this was my 10th year serving as compiler for the Spring Count. The job is not always easy, but I enjoy the count and look forward to doing it again next year. Good birding!

Jasper County: May 9, 143 species, 26965 individuals

Coordinator: Steve Wagner
313 E. 54th St.
Savannah, GA 31405

Participants: Dot Bambach, Steve Calver, Vic Carpenter, Sue DeRosa, Mary Lou Dickson, Judy Johnson, Angela Phillips, Mike Phillips, Rose Talbert, Gail Turner, Steve Wagner

Eleven participants in three parties contributed to Jasper County’s Spring Migration Count on May 9. Dot Bambach led an Ogeechee Audubon group through the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge. Steve Calver covered the dredge spoil disposal area. Steve Wagner birded north along the Savannah River to Tillman, the Nimmer sod farm and areas east of I-95.

We found 19 species of warblers including Ovenbird (3), Northern Waterthrush (1), Yellow (4), Blackpoll (4), Black-throated Blue (1), Yellow-rumped (1) and Black-throated Green (1). Other notable species included American White Pelican (1), Roseate Spoonbill (22), Merlin (3) and Bank Swallow (5).

Table 1. Spring 2015 bird counts in South Carolina

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck						7	6	13
Canada Goose	110	194	28	31		52		415
Wood Duck	17	11		17		36		81
American Wigeon						1		1
Mallard	46	49		24		11		130
Mottled Duck						45	11	56
Blue-winged Teal	7			9		67	5	88
Northern Shoveler	1					2	6	9
Green-winged Teal							1	1
teal sp.							1	1
Greater Scaup							2	2
Lesser Scaup							3	3
Surf Scoter						1		1
Black Scoter						159		159
Bufflehead						2		2
Hooded Merganser	2					1		3
Red-breasted Merganser						5		5
Ruddy Duck		1					8	9
Northern Bobwhite	12	12	2	4		12		42
Wild Turkey	13	9	13	7	1	6		49
Common Loon	3					2		5
Pied-billed Grebe				1		4		5

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
Wood Stork						10	10	20
Double-crested Cormorant	31	12	8			210	51	312
Anhinga				14	60	45	17	136
American White Pelican							1	1
Brown Pelican						239	2	241
American Bittern						1		1
Least Bittern						26	3	29
Great Blue Heron	15	23	8	7	3	29	6	91
Great Egret				3	6	154	44	207
Snowy Egret						214	86	300
Little Blue Heron						44	3	47
Tricolored Heron						38	26	64
Cattle Egret				56		21	42	119
Green Heron	10	1		5	1	46	9	72
Black-crowned Night-Heron						19	3	22
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron				2			1	3
White Ibis					18	104	52	174
Glossy Ibis						6	5	11
Roseate Spoonbill							22	22
Black Vulture	27	11	18	29	4	66	8	163
Turkey Vulture	46	25	12	49	7	171	19	329
Osprey	5	2	4	2	1	33	3	50
Swallow-tailed Kite						6	1	7
Mississippi Kite		1		211	2	21	10	245
Bald Eagle		2	1	2		17	5	27
Northern Harrier						1	1	2
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	1		1			1	4
Cooper's Hawk	3	1	2	2		2		10
Red-shouldered Hawk	17	8	5	13	3	22	2	70
Broad-winged Hawk	6	2	2			2		12
Red-tailed Hawk	18	17	3	4	2	8	3	55
Black Rail						1		1
Clapper Rail						13	5	18
Sora						1		1
Purple Gallinule							14	14
Common Gallinule				1		42	52	95
American Coot	1					8	27	36
Black-necked Stilt						106	172	278
American Avocet							28	28
American Oystercatcher						35		35
Black-bellied Plover						180	107	287
Wilson's Plover						39	3	42
Semipalmated Plover						1571	126	1697
Piping Plover						1		1
Killdeer	8	25	20	6	2	5	17	83
Spotted Sandpiper	11	1	4	16		117	18	167
Solitary Sandpiper	7	3		28	3	10	23	74
Greater Yellowlegs		1		2		146	4	153
Willet						98	30	128
Lesser Yellowlegs	1			37		348	66	452
Whimbrel						167	69	236
Ruddy Turnstone						69		69
Red Knot						371		371
Stilt Sandpiper							581	581
Sanderling						274		274
Dunlin						394	145	539
Least Sandpiper				32		52	281	365

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
White-rumped Sandpiper							5	5
Semipalmated Sandpiper						140	2462	2602
Western Sandpiper						21	4	25
peep sp.						52		52
Short-billed Dowitcher						622	48	670
Long-billed Dowitcher						3		3
dowitcher sp.						4	5	9
Bonaparte's Gull	1					4		5
Laughing Gull						1273	21	1294
Ring-billed Gull	1					19	7	27
Herring Gull						19		19
Great Black-backed Gull						1		1
Least Tern						43	590	633
Gull-billed Tern						15	105	120
Caspian Tern						6		6
Black Tern							7	7
Common Tern						2		2
Forster's Tern						101	7	108
Royal Tern						139		139
Sandwich Tern						126		126
Black Skimmer						637	501	1138
Rock Pigeon	30	75	33				1	139
Eurasian Collared-Dove	8	10	1	1				20
Common Ground-Dove				1		4	1	6
Mourning Dove	187	176	92	84	6	69	57	671
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	3	5	1	14	3	54	1	81
<i>Coccyus</i> sp.							2	2
Eastern Screech-Owl	1	1		5	1	5	1	14
Great Horned Owl	1			4				5
Barred Owl	13	3		9	4	15		44
Common Nighthawk		3				1	5	9
Chuck-will's-widow	4	9	3	21	1	28	4	70
Eastern Whip-poor-will	10	3	3	4				30
Chimney Swift	115	85	18	30	6	13	7	274
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	11	20	1	4	1	18	6	61
Belted Kingfisher	7	4		3	1			15
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	14	2	18	1	7	5	48
Red-bellied Woodpecker	81	44	19	60	3	117	21	345
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		2						2
Downy Woodpecker	26	19	2	14	2	10	4	77
Hairy Woodpecker	2				1			3
Red-cockaded Woodpecker						12		12
Northern Flicker	5	9	1			2		17
Pileated Woodpecker	17	8	6	27	6	24	3	101
American Kestrel		1	1					2
Merlin							3	3
Eastern Wood-Pewee	4	11	4	42	3	4	7	75
Acadian Flycatcher	7	13	2	20	7	10	4	63
Eastern Phoebe	42	23	10	5	1			81
Great Crested Flycatcher	21	28	15	59	6	262	22	413
Eastern Kingbird	57	20	6	76		56	24	239
Loggerhead Shrike				1		2	2	5
White-eyed Vireo	48	7	8	89	20	56	18	246
Yellow-throated Vireo	5	2	1	7	1	1	2	19
Blue-headed Vireo	22	3			1			26
Red-eyed Vireo	97	40	17	68	13	88	14	337
Blue Jay	251	111	34	38	3	74	8	519

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
American Crow	192	164	61	75	2	137	12	643
Fish Crow	13	11	3	8	3	32	9	79
crow sp.				30		8		38
Horned Lark		7						7
Purple Martin	1	105	19	8		123		256
Tree Swallow	15	13		1		6	17525	17560
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	74	10	9	23		21	6	143
Bank Swallow							5	5
Cliff Swallow		531	46	6	15			598
Barn Swallow	70	202	13	9	3	127	102	526
Carolina Chickadee	79	83	14	40	7	112	5	343
Tufted Titmouse	142	87	27	116	12	171	12	567
White-breasted Nuthatch	19	5	4	18	1		1	48
Brown-headed Nuthatch	25	1	3	19	5	49	4	106
House Wren	3	6		1				10
Marsh Wren						12	1	13
Carolina Wren	118	81	18	98	9	172	22	518
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	127	24	6	55	24	86	23	345
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	4	1		2				7
Eastern Bluebird	111	117	57	42	2	60	12	401
Veery					2	1		3
Swainson's Thrush	3				3			6
Hermit Thrush	2			2				4
Wood Thrush	25	6	3	6	1		1	42
American Robin	187	132	42	4		1		366
Gray Catbird	29	13	1	14	12	24	19	112
Brown Thrasher	47	44	10	9	1	21	11	143
Northern Mockingbird	85	102	59	51		66	23	386
European Starling	109	141	87	26		24	3	390
Cedar Waxwing	240	114	27	12	3		70	466
Ovenbird	19	2	2	8	4		3	38
Worm-eating Warbler	20					8		28
Louisiana Waterthrush	11	5	1	2				19
Northern Waterthrush	1			2		1	1	5
Blue-winged Warbler	1							1
Black-and-white Warbler	28	3		10	2	9	7	59
Prothonotary Warbler	2	3	1	21	6	30	5	68
Swainson's Warbler	1			3	1	1	2	8
Kentucky Warbler	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	9
Common Yellowthroat	41	22	8	30	5	78	41	225
Hooded Warbler	44	5	3	9	6	72	7	146
American Redstart	14			6	3		24	47
Cape May Warbler	7							7
Cerulean Warbler	1							1
Northern Parula	48	11	3	158	15	188	23	446
Magnolia Warbler	2	2						4
Bay-breasted Warbler	1							1
Blackburnian Warbler	1							1
Yellow Warbler	8			1		2	4	15
Chestnut-sided Warbler	2			1	1	1		5
Blackpoll Warbler	5			2		1	4	12
Black-throated Blue Warbler	10	1		9	7	3	1	31
Palm Warbler	18	1		1				20
Pine Warbler	24	19	12	93	6	87	27	268
Yellow-rumped Warbler	151	17		7	1	7	1	184
Yellow-throated Warbler	12	1		32	5	44	16	110

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
Prairie Warbler	12	4	1	8		21	3	49
Black-throated Green Warbler	31						1	32
Canada Warbler	1							1
Yellow-breasted Chat	12	8	6	29	1	13	9	78
Eastern Towhee	79	35	17	40	2	39	10	222
Bachman's Sparrow				3		2	3	8
Chipping Sparrow	111	23	19	8		2	6	169
Field Sparrow	40	29	33	1				103
Savannah Sparrow	3	2	1	5			17	28
Grasshopper Sparrow	17	6	1					24
Seaside Sparrow						4		4
Song Sparrow	29	28	2	2				61
Lincoln's Sparrow		1						1
Swamp Sparrow	1					1		2
White-throated Sparrow	65	8		2	1	1		77
White-crowned Sparrow	21							21
Summer Tanager	8	18	18	60	7	48	9	168
Scarlet Tanager	30	3		2	1	1		37
Northern Cardinal	198	211	36	191	14	333	89	1072
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	24	3		2				29
Blue Grosbeak	16	14	10	37	3	13	10	103
Indigo Bunting	80	30	19	96	11	29	24	289
Painted Bunting				7	1	109	31	148
Bobolink	2	15		531		41	1319	1908
Red-winged Blackbird	127	48	14	31	2	539	799	1560
Eastern Meadowlark	56	31	46	1				134
Common Grackle	179	193	46	19	7	120	23	587
Boat-tailed Grackle						90	331	421
Brown-headed Cowbird	81	43	31	35	13	64	14	281
Orchard Oriole	19	10	1	6	2	23	9	70
Baltimore Oriole	2							2
House Finch	54	60	11	9		20		154
Purple Finch		12						12
Pine Siskin	43			26				69
American Goldfinch	233	40	8	14	4			299
House Sparrow	32	19	9	2		3		65
Species	135	116	86	124	81	165	143	223
Total individuals	5296	4148	1279	3557	441	13478	26965	55164
<u>Regular Count</u>								
Hours foot	57.3	38.5	28	24.3	7.5	65.75	5.8	227.15
Hours car	22.25	16.5	8	12.3	0.5	22.5	19.1	101.15
Hours boat		3				8.41		11.41
Hours canoe/kayak				1.5				1.5
Hours bike		1						1
Hours other (golf cart)						2		2
Miles foot	36.25	32	8	7.75	8.5	31.45	2.25	126.2
Miles car	223.5	334.5	161	131	4	184.6	116.7	1155.3
Miles boat		8				49.9		57.9
Miles canoe/kayak				0.75				0.75
Miles bike		18						18
Miles other (golf cart)						6.4		6.4
# Regular parties	16	13	5	6-3	3	16	3	62
# Regular observers	32	20	6	12	28	42	11	151

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
#Species		106	84	118			141	
#Individuals		3452	1231	3438			26960	
<u>Feeder Watch</u>								
Hours Feeder Watch		35	4	13.5				52.5
#Feeder Watchers		16	2	4				22
#Feeder Stations		11	2	4				17
#Species		55	12	22				89
#Individuals		677	44	78				799
<u>Nocturnal</u>								
Hours Nocturnal	3.15	2	2	3.25	1	2.09	0.58	14.07
Miles Nocturnal		33	2	10	0.5	11	0.25	56.75
#parties nocturnal	6	3	1	3	1	4	1	19
#observers nocturnal	16	5	1	3	26	6	1	58
#Species		5	2	5			2	
#Individuals		19	6	41			5	
Time Start	0530	0600	0700	0500	0530	0430	0547	
Time Stop	2130	2200	2200	2100	1400	1630	1945	
<u>Temperature</u>								
Pre-Dawn				46	52	55	65	
Dawn	58			46	59	54	66	
AM				65	72	71	76	
Noon	72			71	77	75	80	
PM	76			76	80	79	82	
Sunset				76	79	67	80	
Night				73	69	63		
<u>Wind</u>								
Pre-Dawn	light			0	calm	0-5	NNW3	
Dawn	light			0	calm	0-5	NNW4	
AM	light			W3	SE5	0-5	NW6	
Noon	light			W3	E7	5-10	NNE12	
PM	light			W5	ESE11	5-10	NNW7	
Sunset	light			W5	ESE8	0-5		
Night				W3	SE4	0-5		
<u>% Clouds</u>								
Pre-Dawn	PC			0	0	0-15	0	
Dawn	PC			0	0	0-15	0	
AM	PC			0	0	0-15	0	
Noon	PC			0	PC	0-15	70	
PM	PC			0	PC	16-33	50	
Sunset	PC			0	PC	0-15		
Night				0	PC	0-15		
<u>Precipitation</u>								
Pre-Dawn	0			0	0	0	0	
Dawn	0			0	0	0	0	
AM	0			0	0	0	0	
Noon	0			0	0	0	0	
PM	0			0	0	0	0	
Sunset	0			0	0	0	0	
Night	0			0	0	0	0	

2015 Annual Report of the North Carolina Bird Records Committee

Z. Taylor Piephoff¹, Chair, Susan Campbell, Michael McCloy, H. Douglas Pratt, Simon R. B. Thompson, Jeffrey S. Pippen, Steven P. Shultz, Nathan A. Swick, and Michael H. Tove

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The make-up of the 2015 North Carolina Bird Records Committee included additions of Susan Campbell, Michael McCloy, and Simon R. B. Thompson as voting members; and the retention of Richard J. Davis and Harry E. LeGrand, Jr. in advisory capacities. Keith E. Camburn rotated off the committee for at least a one-year hiatus.

Accepted as Valid. The following reports were judged to be acceptable.

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) (15-01). The North Carolina Bird Records Committee (NCBRC) reviewed a written report by Harry LeGrand of an individual of this species at Pungo Refuge 11 January 2015. The report was unanimously accepted. This report represents the third record for the state and the second accepted record for the Coastal region (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Hooded Oriole (*Icterus cucullatus*) (15-02). A series of photographs by John Brammer of an immature male of this species from a feeder in Charlotte (Mecklenburg) on 6 February 2015 were reviewed. In the initial round of voting, a majority of committee members felt the bird was a Hooded Oriole but the committee returned an “unresolved” verdict, thereby requiring input from outside reviewers. Two members felt that Orchard Oriole (*Icterus spurius*) could not be ruled out. After receiving outside input comments from Mary Gustafson and Eric Carpenter, the NCBRC voted unanimously to accept the report. This represents the first state record for the species and it is placed on the Definitive List by virtue of definitive photographs.

Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) (15-07). The NCBRC accepted, with 8 votes to accept (AV) and 1 as inadequately documented (ID), written reports of an individual of this species from inland Lake Waccamaw (Columbus) on 12 May 2015 from Ed Corey and John Finnegan with photos by Jeffrey Beane. This represents the first inland record for the state. The species is on the Definitive List due to numerous records from offshore locations (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna autumnalis*) (15-08). The NCBRC unanimously accepted a written report with photographs from Dwayne Martin of 7 individuals from Linville Lake (Avery) seen 27 May 2015. The species is already on the Definitive List; this represents the third

accepted record from the mountains (LeGrand et al. 2015).

White-faced Ibis (*Plegadis chihi*) (15-09). A 15 May 2015 written report with photos submitted by Greg Perry from Raccoon Island (Carteret) of an adult bird in a wading bird rookery was unanimously accepted by the NCBRC. This is the first coastal record away from Lake Mattamuskeet (Hyde) where there are multiple accepted records, and from South Nags Head (Dare) where the first state record occurred in 2002 (LeGrand et al. 2015). The species is already on the Definitive List.

Trumpeter Swan (*Cygnus buccinator*) (15-10). A photo of a bird from Pungo refuge taken by Keith Ramos on 4 January 2015 was reviewed by the NCBRC and was unanimously accepted. This represents the fourth record for the state and the third from the Coastal region.

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*) (15-12). A written report by Dwayne Martin with photos by Lori Owenby of an individual of this species from upper Lake Norman (Catawba) on 28 July 2015 was unanimously accepted by the NCBRC. This represents the fourth record for the state and the first from the Piedmont region (LeGrand et al. 2015). The species is already on the Definitive List by virtue of definitive photographs of this species accepted from New Bern (Craven) in 1998 (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Townsend's Solitaire (*Myadestes townsendi*) (15-13). A first state record for this species was unanimously accepted by the NCBRC after reviewing written reports from Curtis Smalling and Jesse Pope, and photographs from Pope of a bird at Grandfather Mountain (Avery) on 13 August 2015. The species is placed on the Definitive List by virtue of the submitted definitive photographs.

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) (15-14). The NCBRC reviewed written details and photographs by Doug Johnston of an immature bird observed at Lake Julian (Buncombe) on 11 September 2015. The report was unanimously accepted and provides the first record of the species from the Mountain region (LeGrand et al. 2015). The species is already on the Definitive List due to numerous records from the Coastal region.

Buff-bellied Hummingbird (*Amazilia yucatanensis*) (15-15). An adult male of this species appeared at a feeder in Winston-Salem (Forsyth) in September 2015 and lingered through the remainder of the year. Written details by Ron Morris and in-hand photos by Michael McCloy during the banding of this individual from 22 September 2015 were reviewed by the NCBRC and unanimously accepted. The species is already on the Definitive List due to accepted photos of a bird from Oriental (Pamlico) in October 2008. This provides the second record for the state and the first from the Piedmont region (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) (15-16). A written report by John Finnegan and a photo by Lucas Bobay of an immature bird at the North Carolina State Agroecology Education Farm (Wake) from 3 October 2015 was

unanimously accepted after review by the NCBRC. This record is the third for the Piedmont region and is the first from this region in 39 years (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) (15-17). A 7 October 2015 report of a first-year bird from the Hooper Lane Sod Farms (Henderson) with written details and photos from Doug Johnston was reviewed by the NCBRC and unanimously accepted. This record is the first for the species from the Mountain region (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Sage Thrasher (*Oreoscoptes montanus*) (15-18). The NCBRC unanimously accepted a written report and photos from James Poling of an individual of this species from the Warren Wilson farm fields (Buncombe) on 31 October 2015. This record represents the third state record for the species and the first for the Mountain region. The species is already on the Definitive List due to the collection of a specimen from Woodlake (Moore) on 19 September 1973 (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Black-headed Grosbeak (*Pheucticus melanocephalus*) (15-21). The NCBRC received written details from Curtis Smalling and a photo by Steven Bullock of an adult male at Boone (Watauga) from 11 May 2007. The report was unanimously accepted. Though there are about 10 previous records for the state and the species is on the Definitive List, this record is the first for the Mountain region (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Black-legged Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) (15-22). The NCBRC reviewed and unanimously accepted written details from Harry LeGrand and photos by Lucas Bobay of an immature bird seen at Beaverdam Reservoir (Wake) 29 November 2015. This represents the first record of the species from the Piedmont region (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*) (15-23). Jamie Adams submitted written details and photographs of a bird on Masonboro Island (New Hanover) from 6 November 2015. After review from the NCBRC the report was unanimously accepted. The species is already on the Definitive List by virtue of a specimen collected from the Salvo Campground (Dare) 14 February 1967; this 2015 record is the third accepted for the state (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Not Accepted. The following reports were judged to be not accepted.

Yellow-nosed Albatross (*Thalassarche chlororhynchos*) (15-05). A written report of an individual of this species seen offshore just north of Oregon Inlet (Dare) 22 March 2014 was not accepted by a majority of NCBRC votes. While it was widely accepted that the observer saw an albatross and 2 members voted to accept (AV), 5 members voted ID (Inadequately Documented) and 2 voted for US (Unacceptable Sighting). Concerns were that key field marks were not mentioned and the exact species of albatross could not be determined by the written details provided. The species is already on the Definitive List based

on previously accepted reports with diagnostic photographs (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Bewick's Wren (*Thryomanes bewickii*) (15-06). A report from 2 April 2015 from Chatham County was not accepted by majority vote from the NCBRC. One member voted AV, 5 voted ID, and 3 voted as US. The committee felt the details provided lacked mention of key field marks and did not positively eliminate other more expected species of wren. The species is already on the Definitive List based on historical records of this once-common mountain breeder (LeGrand et al. 2015).

Western Reef-Heron (*Egretta gularis*) (15-11). A written description accompanied by an intriguing photograph of a heron from Raccoon Island (Carteret) on 25 June 2015 was ultimately not accepted as this species. Though one vote to accept (AV) was cast, 3 ID and 4 US votes reflected majority concerns that plumage inconsistencies with Western Reef-Heron and lack of photographs showing the entire bird, could not positively eliminate Tricolored Heron (*Egretta tricolor*). One member abstained from voting (AB).

Gray-crowned Rosy-Finch (*Leucosticte tephrocotis*) (15-19). An intriguing written report of a bird from a grassy bald in Pisgah National Forest (Haywood) on 30 October 2015 was not accepted by the NCBRC. Two votes to accept (AV) were cast but a majority of voters (5 ID) felt the written description fell short of the desired level of documentation to justify a vote to accept. One vote of Questionable Origin (QO) was also received.

Unresolved. The following reports are pending due to being sent for outside review.

Crested Caracara (*Caracara cheriway*) (15-04). A majority of NCBRC members (5 AV) voted to accept a written description of a bird seen at Enfield (Halifax) on 21 February 2015, but the report failed to garner the necessary votes for first ballot acceptance (1 QO, 3 ID). Members voting not to accept cited concerns over origin and written details from an observer unfamiliar with the species and with no optical aids during the observance.

White-cheeked Pintail (*Anas bahamensis*) (15-20). A written description with photos of a bird at Pea Island NWR on 30 September 2015 were reviewed by the NCBRC. While there was no doubt among the committee the identification was correct, enough concerns were raised over origin (2 QO) that the report could not be accepted on the first ballot.

A list of all the species reviewed can be seen at <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/brc/NC/reports.html>. Finally, the NCBRC Chair received six reports of regularly occurring species that are not on the Review List.

Summary

With this round of voting, Townsend's Solitaire and Hooded Oriole are

added to the Definitive List. The total number of species from North Carolina is now 477 on the Accepted List of which 463 are Definitive (gain of two species over the final 2014 List), two are considered Not Established, and 12 are Provisional.

Literature Cited

LeGrand, H., J. Haire, A. Iyooob, and T. Howard. 2015. Birds of North Carolina: their Distribution and Abundance. <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/ncbirds/accounts.php>

2015 Annual Report of the South Carolina Bird Records Committee

Chris Hill¹, Chair, Giff Beaton, Jeff Click, Aaron Given, Lex Glover, Keith McCullough, William Post, and Steve Wagner

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In 2015, the South Carolina Bird Records Committee (SCBRC) took action on 51 new reports, of which 47 were accepted, 4 not accepted. These reports included 24 “reports” which were photographs of review species which had been uploaded to the Carolina Bird Club photo web site without a formal report to the BRC. We also voted on two reports from early 2016, both of which were accepted. We voted a second and final time on a 2014 report. The original vote on that report had been inconclusive, so we obtained comment from an outside expert and then revoted. That report was not accepted in the second vote.

The accepted records added three species to South Carolina’s Main Species List: Trindade Petrel, Thayer’s Gull and Scott’s Oriole. The Main Species list currently stands at 433 species. The most recent version of the list is available online at <http://carolinabirdclub.org/brc>. Also at that site is a list of reports the committee is currently considering, and ones on which we have recently voted.

The committee started 2015 with a ninth member, Irvin Pitts, who resigned to serve as president to the Carolina Bird Club, and we finished the rest of the year with eight members. We thank Irvin for his service on the committee. The committee for 2016 will include all the members listed at the top of the article, plus Simon Harvey of Simpsonville, SC.

Below we detail actions taken by the SC Bird Records Committee in 2015.

Accepted reports

Fulvous Whistling-Duck (*Dendrocygna bicolor*) (2015-054). A single Fulvous Whistling-Duck was well photographed and banded at Tom Yawkey Wildlife Center in Georgetown County, where it was associating with Black-bellied Whistling-Ducks and other waterfowl. The status of the two *Dendrocygnas* in South Carolina has almost completely reversed in the last 50 years. As of the publication of Post and Gauthreaux’s “Status and Distribution of South Carolina Birds” in 1989, Fulvous was considered an “erratic winter visitor...locally common during invasion years,” while Black-bellied was considered accidental, with only one record. In the intervening

decades, Black-bellied has become a regular feature of the South Carolina avifauna, breeding at many sites in the coastal plain, while Fulvous has become vanishingly scarce. This is the first report voted on by the bird record committee, and the Bird Banding Lab (*fide* Jamie Dozier) reports that it is the first individual banded in the state since 1963.

Eurasian Wigeon (*Anas penelope*) (Two reports accepted: 2015-003 & 2015-053). Lois Stacey and Willie Malpass each submitted a good description of a drake Eurasian Wigeon seen at Savannah NWR on 24 January 2015. Craig Watson submitted written notes and a photograph of another drake seen at Tibwin Plantation, Charleston County, on 20 December 2015. European Wigeon are rare visitors to the South Carolina coast, and casual inland (Post and Gauthreaux 1989).

Harlequin Duck (*Histrionicus histrionicus*) (2015-011). The committee voted on photographs of a drake Harlequin Duck submitted to the Carolina Bird Club photo site by Simon Thompson. The bird was seen 15 January 2006 at Huntington Beach State Park. Harlequin Ducks are rare winter visitors to the coast of South Carolina (Post and Gauthreaux 1989; McNair and Post 1993).

White-winged Scoter (*Melanitta fusca*) (2015-031). Rare in the upstate, Paul Serridge submitted written notes and photographs taken by Barry Phillips and David Booth of a bird at Lake Conestee Nature Park in Greenville on 7 and 8 March 2015.

Western Grebe (*Aechmophorus occidentalis*) (2015-055). Seldom documented in South Carolina, a Western Grebe was seen and photographed by Wendy Allen off the south end of Pawleys Island on 30 December 2015 during the Litchfield-Pawleys Island Christmas Bird Count, and seen during the following week by several other observers. This is the first documented report of the species since 1999 (Glover et al. 2002), though a 2011 report was accepted as *Aechmophorus* sp. (Hill et al. 2014).

Trindade Petrel (*Pterodroma arminjoniana*) (2015-033). New for South Carolina. Tom Johnson photographed an individual of this species and submitted excellent documentation to the Georgia Ornithological Society. The location of the sighting, at 31.161 N, 77.249 W is in South Carolina Waters by the closest point of land criterion, as adopted by both Georgia and South Carolina records committees. With the help of Jim Flynn and Joel McNeal, the report that had been filed with the Georgia committee was communicated to the South Carolina committee and was accepted unanimously. This report and the accompanying photographs place this species on the definitive list for South Carolina.

Fea's Petrel (*Pterodroma feae*) (Two reports accepted: 2015-036 & 2015-044). The committee voted on reports published in two articles (Haney et al. 1993; Dias 2014). The committee accepted the bird in Haney et al. (1993).

Dias (2014) describes three sightings. The committee had previously voted on and accepted independent documentation of one of these birds, from 10 June 2013 (Hill et al. 2015). 2015-036 was the number the committee assigned to a bird reported from 22 June 2012, which the committee also voted to accept.

Roseate Spoonbill (*Platylea ajaja*) (2015-040). Rare inland, the committee accepted a report from Lois Stacey of four birds at Silver Bluff Audubon Center, Aiken County.

White-tailed Kite (*Elanus leucurus*) (2015-032). An adult was observed and photographed by Carl Miller at Bear Island WMA on 7 March 2015. This species is known in South Carolina from seven historical reports and specimens (dating back to John James Audubon) (Post and Gauthreaux 1989), plus two other reports accepted by the committee: an adult in April 1999 at Clemson University (Glover et al. 2002), and a bird at the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR in October 2006 (Slyce et al. 2008)

Northern Goshawk (*Accipiter gentilis*) (2015-004). Alan Larmon submitted photographs of an adult Northern Goshawk that hit his bay window in Richland County on December 16, 2000. This is the fourth accepted report of Northern Goshawk in South Carolina. Previous accepted reports included a sight report from the Caesar's Head hawkwatch on 9 October 1995 (Worthington et al. 1997), a specimen found and photographed in December 2007 at Kiawah Island (Slyce et al. 2008) and a bird photographed at the Savannah River Spoils Site on 2 January 2012 (Pitts et al. 2013).

Yellow Rail (*Coturnicops novaboracensis*) (2015-046). A bird in juvenal plumage was picked up in a suburban backyard in Surfside Beach, SC on 11 November 2015, and brought to Ark Animal Hospital where the finders described it as "a young bird fallen from the nest too young to fly" (which it clearly was not!). A photo of the bird was posted on the internet with a query about its identity, and a helpful person from New York identified it as a young European Starling (which again, it clearly was not!). Tim Kalbach, formerly of the Carolinas but now in Florida, spotted the photo on line, notified some locals, and the bird, which expired at the animal hospital, ended up in the collection of Coastal Carolina University. Ah, the wonders of bird identification in the 21st century! Yellow Rails, which formerly wintered regularly in South Carolina coastal marshes, may still do so, but are essentially never reported from there and their status is poorly known. It is likely that they pass through as migrants in late fall, and this bird's unfortunate collision with a suburban window provided evidence of that.

Limpkin (*Aramus guarauna*) (2015-039). Michael Barnett and James Yates submitted photographs of a Limpkin seen on 26 July 2015 on the Little Pee Dee River in Marion County. This is the seventh accepted record of Limpkin in the state.

Snowy Plover (*Charadrius nivosus*) (Two reports accepted: 2015-018 & 2014-021) Snowy plovers photographed by Cathy Miller at Kiawah Island on

24 August 2008 and by Sidney Maddock at Deveaux Bank on 27 November 2003 constitute the fifth and sixth accepted records for South Carolina.

Curlew Sandpiper (*Calidris ferruginea*) (2015-025). An individual photographed at the Savannah Spoils Site on 31 May 2004 by Steve Calver provides the third accepted report for this species, following one at the Savannah Spoils Site in 1991 and one at North Island, Georgetown County, in 1992 (Carter and Worthington 1992; Worthington 1993).

Ruff (*Calidris pugnax*) (Three reports accepted: 2015-026, 2015-041 & 2015-043). The committee received three documented reports of Ruffs: a male molting out of breeding plumage 1 August 2008 at the Savannah Spoils site, photographed by Steve Calver, a male 18 June 2015 at Santee Coastal Reserve, reported by Steve Thomas, and a juvenile at Myrtle Beach State Park 7 October 2015 found by Scott Hartley and Ann Wilson.

Thick-billed Murre (*Uria lomvia*) (Two reports accepted: 2015-006 & 2015-050). A Thick-billed Murre was photographed near the Cherry Grove Pier in North Myrtle Beach on 17 February 2015 by Bill Bendoritis. Another young Thick-billed Murre was found ashore at Litchfield Beach on 1 December 2015 and brought to the Birds of Prey center in Awendaw, where it perished. The specimen was transferred to Coastal Carolina University to become part of the teaching collection there. Post and Gauthreaux (1989) list one specimen, and one additional report was accepted by the BRC (Slyce et al. 2006), making the records here the third and fourth for South Carolina.

Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) (2015-024). The committee voted to accept a photograph submitted to the Carolina Bird Club photo gallery of a bird seen 25 August 2011 by Steve Calver.

Franklin's Gull (*Leucophaeus pipixcan*) (Four reports accepted: 2015-027, 2015-045, 2015-048, & 2015-049). The first of four Franklin's Gull reports was a photo by Steve Calver of a first year bird from 22 November 2011 from the Savannah Spoils Site. That photo resulted in a split vote, but was accepted 6-1 in the second vote. The other three were part of a large movement of birds down the east coast in November 2015 and included first year birds at Waites Island on the 11th (Chris Hill) and at Sullivan's Island on the 20th (Craig Watson) and an adult at Isle of Palms on the 18th (Matthew Campbell). Post and Gauthreaux (1989) and McNair and Post (1993) list five combined records of Franklin's Gull, and the committee has accepted one other previous report (Glover et al. 2002).

Thayer's Gull (*Larus thayeri*) (2016-002). First for South Carolina. An adult photographed by Chris Hill at the Horry County Landfill on 11 January 2016 was the first accepted record for South Carolina. The photographs put the species on the definitive list.

Brown Noddy (*Anous stolidus*) (2015-007). Due to the acceptance by both South Carolina and Georgia bird record committees of "closest point of land" definitions of pelagic boundaries, a Brown Noddy that had been observed and

photographed on 31 May 2012 by Joel McNeal in what he then considered Georgia waters, and which had been accepted by the Georgia committee, is now considered to have been seen in South Carolina waters. The report to the Georgia committee was viewed this year by the South Carolina committee, who voted to accept the record. The bird was seen perched on Navy Tower R7 at 31.817N, 80.274W. Post and Gauthreaux (1989) list 9 previous records of Brown Noddies, on dates from 16 June to 11 October, with six of the nine sightings taking place in August and September.

Snowy Owl (*Bubo scandiacus*) (2015-010). A Snowy Owl was photographed in Clarendon County on 27 February 2015 by Betsey Bergen.

Black-chinned Hummingbird (*Archilocus alexandri*). (Three reports accepted: 2015-002, 2015-028, & 2015-035). An adult male Black-chinned Hummingbird spent two months (6 February to 5 April) in the yard of Edith and Marion Clark in Lexington, where it fed from camelia blossoms and a nectar feeder. A second adult male was on James Island from 14 to 25 January 2015 where it was photographed by Jennifer Tyrell. A third adult male was at Charleston on 17 November 2007 (Doreen Cubie), where it was photographed, and photos were posted to the Carolina Bird Club photo gallery.

Ash-throated Flycatcher (*Myiarchus cinerascens*) (2015-052). Visiting out-of-state birder Carl Engstrom obtained and submitted identifiable photographs of a bird at Savannah NWR, seen there from 9-14 March 2014. This is the sixth accepted record of the species for South Carolina.

Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) (2015-020). A photograph by Mike Turner from Columbia was accepted by the committee. Gray Kingbird is a rare vagrant in South Carolina.

Cave Swallow (*Petrochelidon fulva*) (Three accepted reports: 2015-012, 2015-013 and 2015-047). The committee accepted photo-documented reports from the Georgetown Airport on 14 December 2012 (Dennis Forsythe) and from Huntington Beach State Park on April 15 2006 (Dan Chambers), as well as a written description from North Myrtle Beach on 24 November 2015 (Joseph Gyekis).

Western Tanager (*Piranga ludoviciana*) (Four accepted reports: 2015-014, 2015-015, 2015-016 & 2015-017). Western Tanager has reached the status of uncommon winter visitor, rather than a rare vagrant, in South Carolina, and will probably be dropped from the review list at the next revision. These four well-documented reports were from Kiawah Island, Okatie, Hilton Head and Myrtle Beach on 28 March 2014, 16 January 2014, 16 March 2012 and 24 January 2012, and were photographed by Liz King, Diane Rand, Stanton Allaben and Phil Turner respectively.

Sprague's Pipit (*Anthus spragueii*) (Two accepted reports: 2015-022 & 2015-023). Birds photographed by Steve Calver at the Savannah Spoils Site on 14 October 2011 and 29 October 2008 add to eight previously published records in the state (Post and Gauthreaux 1989; McNair and Post 1993).

Yellow-rumped “Audubon’s” Warbler (*Setophaga coronata auduboni*) (2015-051). A bird photographed by Jack Rogers at Mount Pleasant was the third documented record of this western subspecies of Yellow-rumped Warbler.

Shiny Cowbird (*Molothrus bonariensis*) (2015-009). This record is of a bird photographed at Huntington Beach State Park by Charles Tysinger on 14 June 2006. This species was first documented in the state on 16 July 1989 (McNair and Post 1993), and was documented inland by 1996 (Worthington et al. 1996), and has been shown to breed in the state (Post and Sykes 2011), but has dried up, with no reports since this bird photographed in 2006.

Bullock’s Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*) (Two reports accepted: 2015-005 & 2015-029). Birds were photo-documented by Aaron Given and Jay Chandler near Ravenel and Hemingway, respectively, on 19 February 2015 and 11 December 2011.

Scott’s Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*) (2016-001). A male at a feeder in Six Mile, Pickens County, was seen by many visitors and well documented by Imtiaz Haque for a first record of this species in the state. Photographs put this species on the definitive list.

Non-accepted reports

Fea’s Petrel (*Pterodroma feae*) (2015-037). This report refers to the second Fea’s Petrel reported from June 10, 2013 in Dias (2014). The committee had no doubt that the photographed bird was a Fea’s Petrel, but not all members were convinced it was shown to be a different individual from the other Fea’s Petrel reported from the same trip (record 2015-036 above). After an inconclusive first vote, the report was not accepted on a second vote.

Red-necked Grebe (*Podiceps grisegena*) (2014-024). This report from the upstate in winter 2014-2015, which resulted in a split vote in 2014, received a second vote after the committee received feedback from an outside expert. Although the reported bird could well have been a Red-necked Grebe, committee members felt the report lacked conclusive details.

Calliope Hummingbird (*Selasphorus calliope*) (2015-042). The description of a bird from Hilton Head Island did not cite sufficient details to allow specific identification of the bird reported.

Gray Kingbird (*Tyrannus dominicensis*) (2015-019). A photograph of a bird posted to the Carolina Bird Club web site, identified as a Gray Kingbird, is more likely an Eastern Kingbird.

Bullock’s Oriole (*Icterus bullockii*) (2015-030). A female-plumaged oriole, initially identified as a Bullock’s, and posted to the Carolina Bird Club photo gallery as a Bullocks, was later identified in hand by the bander as a Baltimore.

Acknowledgements

The committee thanks all the observers who submitted reports. Your actions increase our understanding of bird occurrence in the state. We thank Nathan Swick for helpful comments on one report.

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BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Fall 2015, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

Winter	December 1 - February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1 - May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1 - July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1 - November 30	due December 20

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Reports published herein may include sightings that require review by the state bird record's committee. Such reports are not considered accepted records until, and unless, they are so ruled by the committee.

Abbreviations: **BRP** – Blue Ridge Parkway, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** - Fort, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NF** – National Forest, **NP** - National Park, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **WMA** - Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

Snow Goose: An adult at the WTP along NC-191 in Henderson Co, NC, 28 Sep (Wayne Forsythe) was incredibly early—Snow Geese don't typically arrive in our region until November. Two photographed at a private pond near Meggett, Charleston Co, SC, 29 Nov (Cherrie Sneed) were unusual at a site so far south.

Ross's Goose: Individuals were photographed at Lake Hills, Forsyth Co, NC, 4-15 Nov (Cynthia Donaldson, m. obs.); at the Ocean Isle Beach WTP, Brunswick Co, NC, 24 Nov (Donnie Coody, et al.); on the campus of Furman University, Greenville Co, SC, 27 Nov (Joan Baker, m. obs.); and on a pond in Hillsborough, Orange Co, NC, 29 Nov (Tony DeSantis) through 2 Dec (m. obs.). Three at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 29 Nov (Marty Wall) was a good count.

Brant: One on North Pond at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 11 Oct (Nathan Gatto, et al.) through 24 Oct (Jeff Pippen, m. obs.) was interesting, possibly the same individual seen at that refuge last October.

Eurasian Wigeon: At Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, after one was found on North Pond, 30 Sep (Henry Link), at least one continued at the refuge into winter (m. obs.), and two were seen on South Pond, 21 Oct (Ricky Davis, m. obs.) through 31 Oct (Karen Lebing).

American Wigeon: One at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 8 Aug (Craig Watson, et al.) was unusually early.

White-cheeked Pintail: Pending review by the NC Bird Records Committee was the report, including distant photographs, of a White-cheeked Pintail on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 30 Sep (Peggy Eubank, Audrey Whitlock). NC's two previous sightings of this tropical species, in 2008 and 2010, the latter of which was also made at Pea Island NWR, were unaccepted due to questionable origin.

Northern Pintail: One on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 2 Sep (Audrey Whitlock) was slightly early.

Ring-necked Duck: 10150 at Singletary Lake SP, Bladen Co, NC, 18 Nov (Brian Bockhan) was a remarkable count.

Common Eider: An adult drake in flight off Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 20 Oct (Christine Stoughton-Root) was the only one reported during the period.

Surf Scoter: Unusual for inland sites were two drakes on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 8 Nov (Steve Shultz) and a hen photographed on Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 18 Nov (Allen Boynton).

Black Scoter: A first-year hen off Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 26 Aug (Gary Wiggins, et al.) was early. Inland sightings included six, three drakes and three hens, on Lookout Shoals Lake, Catawba Co, NC, 31 Oct (Dwayne Martin); seven on Lake Hartwell in Clemson, Pickens Co, SC, 5 Nov (Kevin Kubach); two hens on nearby Lake Hickory, Alexander Co, NC, 8 Nov (Martin); and one drake on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 8 Nov (Steve

Shultz).

Common Merganser: A hen photographed on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 29 Nov (Lee Adams, Michael Gosselin, Marty Wall) was unusual for that site.

Red-throated Loon: Juvenile individuals photographed on Falls Lake in Wake Co, NC, 16 Nov (Brian Bockhahn) and at Lake James SP in Burke Co, NC, 28 Nov (Dwayne Martin) were good finds for those inland lakes.

Common Loon: 105 in the Paddy Creek arm of Lake James in Burke Co, NC, 10 Nov (Jamie Cameron) was a noteworthy count for that inland site.

Horned Grebe: One, still in breeding plumage, photographed on Lake Hickory, border of Alexander Co, and Catawba Co, NC, 7 Aug (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby) was incredibly early. One photographed at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 11 Nov (Kevin Kubach, Ben Lam) was a first for that park.

Northern Fulmar: A moribund, light-morph individual was found on the beach in south Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 6 Oct (Audrey Whitlock). Another light-morph individual was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 10 Oct (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Cory's Shearwater: One over Cape Lookout Bight, Carteret Co, NC, 11 Oct (John Fussell, et al.) may have been pushed there by storms in the previous weeks.

Wood Stork: 1050 around Mullet Pond, Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 15 Oct (Don Crutchfield) was an incredibly high number at any location in the Carolinas.

Magnificent Frigatebird: Individuals were seen over the Roanoke Sound off Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 3 Aug (fide Jeff Lewis) and off Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, where photographed, 18 Nov (Lewis Burke, Irvin Pitts).

Masked Booby: Individuals were seen and photographed on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 1 Aug, a first-summer bird, and 21 Aug, a second-summer bird (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Brown Booby: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 7 Aug and 21 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Great Cormorant: Up to two were present around New River Inlet, Onslow Co, NC, 21 Oct through 23 Nov (Gilbert S. Grant).

Anhinga: Two at Cane Creek Park in Union Co, SC, 5 Aug (George Andrews) were unusual for a site so far inland.

American White Pelican: Sightings made in NC included one photographed on a spoil island in the Cape Fear River off Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, 14 Nov (Sam Cooper); 17 on the Bogue Sound near Morehead City, Carteret Co, 22 Nov (Ed Dombrowski, Lou Teer); and 36 in flight over Sneads Ferry, Onslow Co, 30 Nov (Gilbert Grant). White Pelicans returned to

Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 14 Oct (Peggy Eubank) with a high count of 75 there 16 Nov (Karen Lebing). More sightings were made in SC than in NC during the period, however. White Pelicans were present at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 9 Sep (Jay Chandler, et al.) through the end of the period (m. obs.), with a high count of 31 on 14 Nov (Carl Miller). A few of the higher counts at other sites in SC included 50 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 2 Aug (Roger Smith); 145 near the Bull Island Ferry terminal, Charleston Co, 29 Sep (Craig Watson); 68 on Dewees Island, Charleston Co, 9 Nov (Judy Fairchild); 90 off the eastern end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, 13 Nov (Casey Weissburg); and 69 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, 23 Nov (Steve Calver).

American Bittern: Individuals at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 14-15 Sep (Simon Harvey, m. obs.) and at Osceola Lake, Henderson Co, NC, 9 Nov through 1 Dec (Ron Selvey, m. obs.) were good finds for those inland sites.

Least Bittern: A moribund individual was found on the sidewalk in downtown Marion, McDowell Co, NC, after apparently colliding with a window during a period of heavy rain, 5 Oct (Brian and Catherine Fannon, *fide* Curtis Smalling). This species is a rare transient in the western part of our region, and this sighting was a first for McDowell County.

Great Egret: One at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 21 Nov (Bob Rybczynski, et al.) was somewhat late for that inland site.

Snowy Egret: Sightings made outside of the coastal plain included one on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 21 Jul (Lou Skrabec) through 13 Sep (m. obs.); two in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 4 Aug (David Anderson); three at Lake Wylie in Gaston Co, NC, 6 Aug (Steve Tracy); up to three in Eighteenmile Creek, Anderson Co, SC, 10 Aug through 1 Sep (Kevin Kubach); one near the dam on Lake Murray, Lexington Co, SC, 11 Aug (Irvin Pitts); one at the north end of Coddle Creek Reservoir, Cabarrus Co, NC, 21-26 Aug (Jan Fowler, Rob Van Epps); four in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 29 Aug (Scott Winton) and 5 Sep (Mark Kosiewski); and five in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, 13 Sep (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.).

Little Blue Heron: A few of the higher counts at inland sites were 12 in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 27 Jul (David Pennebaker); seven on Lake Wylie in Gaston Co, NC, 2 Aug (Steve Tracy); and seven in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 30 Aug (Mark Kosiewski). An immature individual photographed at Ray's Mill Park in Aberdeen, Moore Co, NC, 6 Oct (Mike McCloy) was rather late for that inland site.

Tricolored Heron: An adult at Lake Wylie in Gaston Co, NC, 2-16 Aug (Steve Tracy) was a good find for a site so far from the coast. An individual

with an injured leg was seen at Sandy Creek Park in Durham Co, NC, 10 Aug (Randy Neighbarger), and by many others through 30 Sep (James Meehan).

Reddish Egret: One around Pea Island NWR and the newly formed inlet just south of South Pond, Dare Co, NC, 22 Oct (Ricky Davis, Kent Fiala) through 12 Nov (Bobby Koch) was locally unusual. High counts for NC and SC respectively were five at the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, 11 Oct (John Fussell, et al.) and eight on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 16 Oct (David McLean).

Cattle Egret: One photographed in a cattle pasture in Vass, Moore Co, NC, 20 Oct (David McCloy, Mike McCloy) was locally unusual, somewhat late for an inland site.

White Ibis: A few of the higher counts of post-breeding wanderers at inland sites were six at the upper end of Lake Norman in Catawba Co, NC, 13 Aug (Derek Hudgins); 14 at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 18 Aug (Richard Kline); and nine on the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 29 Aug (Scott Winton) and 30 Aug (Mark Kosiewski).

Glossy Ibis: Two at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 13 Aug (Tom Ledford) were unusual for a site so far from the coast.

Roseate Spoonbill: Our region's high count was 138 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 23 Nov (Steve Calver). Interestingly, none were reported in NC during the period.

Swallow-tailed Kite: SC's high count was 70 over agricultural fields just south of Allendale, Allendale Co, 21 Jul (Natalie Osborne Smith). Sightings in NC included two in northwestern Jackson Co, 14 Aug (Todd Arcos) and up to five amongst Mississippi Kites over agricultural fields in Scotland Co, 18-26 Aug (Charles Gause, et al.).

Mississippi Kite: SC's high count was 200 over Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 8 Aug (Craig Watson). 20+ over agricultural fields just east of Old Fort, McDowell Co, NC, 26 Aug (James Poling) provided a good count for western NC.

Broad-winged Hawk: High counts at hawk watch sites included 9714 at Grandfather Mountain, Avery Co, NC, 23 Sep (Jesse Pope, et al.); 2718 at Pilot Mountain SP, Surry Co, NC, 23 Sep (Phil Dickinson, et al.); and 2172 at Hanging Rock SP, Stokes Co, NC, 30 Sep (Brian Bockhahn).

Golden Eagle: One photographed over the Muddy Creek Greenway in Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, 14 Nov (David Disher, Cara Woods, et al.) was very unusual for the Piedmont region and a first for that county.

Yellow Rail: An injured individual was taken to a wildlife rehabilitator in Surfside Beach, Horry Co, SC, where it had to be euthanized, 12 Nov (fide Chris Hill).

Clapper Rail: Individuals photographed at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 25 Aug (Mark Kosiewski) and at Maple View Farm, Orange Co, NC,



Limpkin, 12 Aug 2015, Catawba Co, NC. Photo by Lucas Bobay.

20-22 Sep (Ryan Justice, m. obs.) were unusual so far inland, possible firsts for those counties.

Sora: Three at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, during heavy flooding, 4-5 Oct (Wayne Forsythe) was a good count for the mountains.

Purple Gallinule: One on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 16 Nov (Jack Rogers) was unusually late.

Limpkin: The individual found on the upper end of Lake Norman in Catawba Co, NC, 28 Jul (Dwayne Martin) was seen by many in early August until last seen 16 Aug (Mike McCloy). An individual photographed in a hard-to-access area of the Sparkleberry Swamp in southern Sumter Co, SC, 16 Sep (Elizabeth Anderegg) was not re-found.

Black-necked Stilt: Three in the brackish pond adjacent to the Cedar Island Ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 2-16 Aug (John Fussell) and five at Pamlico Point, Pamlico Co, NC, 6 Aug (Cody Stone) were unusual for those sites away from the ocean.

American Avocet: Inland sightings included two at Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 1 Aug (Jan Hansen); 11 at Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 8 Aug (Rob Van Epps); 11, possibly the same individuals seen at Lake Norman three days prior, in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 11 Aug (Lucas Bobay, m. obs.); and one photographed at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 14-20 Oct (Mike McCloy, et al.). In Carteret Co, NC, one at the Rachel Carson Reserve, 1 Sep (John Fussell) and seven on the shore of the Bogue Sound in Morehead City, 19 Oct (Ed Dombrowski) were considered locally unusual. The high count at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, was 400 on 10 Oct (Steve Calver).

American Oystercatcher: 119 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Aug (John Fussell) and 75 at the east end of Shackelford Banks,



American Avocet, 20 Oct 2015, Moore Co, NC. Photo by Michael McCloy.

Carteret Co, NC, 11 Oct (Fussell, et al.) were good counts for those sites. 1193 along the Intercoastal Waterway near Awendaw, Charleston Co, SC, 16 Nov (Mary-Catherine Martin) was a simply amazing count.

Black-bellied Plover: Inland sightings included one at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 5-7 Aug (Steve Patterson); up to three in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 7-10 Sep (Tom Driscoll, Eddie Owens); one on the Ledge Creek arm of Falls Lake, Wake Co, NC, 16 Sep (Brian Bockhahn); and one at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 16 Oct (Mike McCloy, Nancy Williamson). 490 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Sep (John Fussell) was our region's high count.

American Golden-Plover: Sightings included one in the Will Suitt arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 5-15 Sep (Scott Winton, m. obs.); one in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 12 Sep (Eddie Owens); one at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 30 Sep (Audrey Whitlock); four at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 4 Oct (Simon Harvey); two at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 11 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Aaron Steed, Simon Thompson); one on the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 11 Oct (Stan Rule, et al.); and one photographed in Topsail Beach, Pender Co, NC, 2 Nov (Greg Perry).

Snowy Plover: One, presumably the same individual seen in the area in June, was seen on the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Aug and 29 Aug (Derb Carter).

Wilson's Plover: On the barrier strand southeast of the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, nine, five adults and four juvenile birds, 2 Aug (John Fussell, et al.) was a notable count for a non-coastal area. A few of the

higher post-breeding aggregations at sites along the coast included 50 on the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Aug (Derb Carter); 80 on Bird Shoal, Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, 2 Aug (Sam Cooper); 95 on Bird Shoal, 18 Aug (Fussell); 26 at Rich Inlet, 29 Aug (Carter); and 49 on Bird Shoal, 1 Sep (Fussell). Five were seen at the east end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, NC, a site where this species has wintered in past years, 11 Oct (Fussell, et al.).

Semipalmated Plover: A few of the higher counts at inland sites were 12 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 19 Aug (Simon Thompson); 16 in the New Hope Creek arm of Jordan Lake, border of Chatham Co and Durham Co, NC, 25 Aug (Mark Kosiewski); and 20 in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 12 Sep (Eddie Owens). Several large counts were made at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, in late August, including 3000 on 24 Aug (Greg Massey) and 1400+ on 29 Aug (Sam Cooper, Harry Sell).

Piping Plover: One seen at the upper end of Falls Lake, moving between Durham Co and Granville Co, NC, 22 Aug (Steve Shultz) was a great find for that inland site. Two on the barrier strand southeast of the Cedar Island ferry terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 6 Sep and 20 Sep (John Fussell, et al.) were unusual at that site away from the coast. Peak counts at sites along the coast were 31 at the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Aug (Derb Carter); 11 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Aug (Fussell); and 22 at the south end of Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 9 Oct (Kyle Kittelberger).

Spotted Sandpiper: Individuals at nearby sites in Dare Co, NC— at Pea Island NWR, 24 Oct (Jeff Lewis) and the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, 4 Nov (Peggy Eubank) were somewhat late to depart. One at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 21 Nov (Harry LeGrand) was likely the same individual seen at that site last winter.

Willet: Inland sightings involved one photographed at Iswa Nature Preserve, along the Catawba River in western Mecklenburg Co, NC, 20 Aug (Alan Kneidel, et al.); one near the Russell Dam, McCormick Co, SC, 30 Aug (James Flynn, Pat Markey); and four at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 31 Aug (Lucas Bobay).

Upland Sandpiper: Sightings made at sod farms included two in the Riley Unit of Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, 4 Aug (Roger Smith); two at Modern Turf in Sumter Co, SC, 8 Aug (Lex Glover); one at Super Sod along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, 18 Aug (Wayne Forsythe, Simon Thompson); 11 at American Turf in Washington Co, NC, 23 Aug (Audrey Whitlock); and one remaining at Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, 24 Aug (Steve Compton, Irvin Pitts). One was heard calling in flight over the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 16 Aug (Ricky Davis, David Howell). One was flushed from atypical saltmarsh habitat at the newly formed inlet just

south of South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 22 Aug (Jeff Lewis). In the grassy areas around the Wilmington International Airport, New Hanover Co, NC, a traditional fall stop-over for the species, six were seen 22 Aug and two were seen 28 Aug (Sam Cooper).

Whimbrel: Bi-weekly shorebird surveys on Bird Shoal, Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, tallied 73 on 2 Aug (Sam Cooper); 128 on 18 Aug (John Fussell); 45 on 1 Sep (Fussell); and only six by 16 Sep (Fussell).

Long-billed Curlew: Sightings included two at Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Oct (John Cox, et al.) and 3 Nov (Mary-Catherine Martin), and two in a marsh just north of the campground at Edisto Beach SP, Colleton Co, SC, 30 Oct (Luke Cannon, et al.) and 10 Nov, when photographed (Julie Mobley).

Hudsonian Godwit: One was seen on the Salt Flats at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 20 Oct (Christine Stoughton-Root).

Marbled Godwit: One in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 7 Sep (Eddie Owens) and 8 Sep (David Anderson, Mark Kosiewski) was a great find for that inland site. A few of the better counts from sites along the coast were 58 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Sep (John Fussell); 130 at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 16 Sep (Audrey Whitlock); 477 along the Intercoastal Waterway near Awendaw, Charleston Co, SC, 17 Sep (Mary-Catherine Martin); 100 on the eastern end of Shackleford Banks, Carteret Co, 11 Oct (Fussell, et al.); 576 near Awendaw, 18 Oct (Martin); and 350 at Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 22 Oct (John Cox).

Ruddy Turnstone: Inland sightings included one at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 5 Aug (Steve Patterson); an adult in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 7-9 Aug (Jacob Farmer, Brad Wood, et al.); a juvenile in the Will Suitt arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 5-7 Sep (John Finnegan, et al.); and a juvenile photographed at Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 7 Sep (Jan Hansen).

Red Knot: Some noteworthy counts were 220 on sandbars around Barden's Inlet, Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Aug (Sam Cooper); 265 at Botany Bay Plantation WMA, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Aug (Pam Ford, Craig Watson); 536 on Marsh Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 17 Oct (Mary-Catherine Martin); and 516 at Botany Bay Plantation WMA, 15 Nov (Carl Miller, Catherine Miller).

Ruff: A male in late-summer molt plumage was seen at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 7 Sep (Ed Blitch, Perry Nugent). A very tame, possibly sick or injured, juvenile bird was photographed at Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 6 Oct (Scott Hartley, Ann Wilson) and 7 Oct (Robert Gallucci). Amazingly, at least six different Ruffs were seen in SC during 2015.

Stilt Sandpiper: Sightings at inland sites included one at the Modern Turf farm in Sumter Co, SC, 8 Aug (Lex Glover); 27 in the Ellerbe Creek arm of



Ruff, 06 Oct 2015, Horry Co, SC. Photo by Ann Wilson.

Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 11 Sep (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly); two in the Reedy Fork arm of Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 13-20 Sep (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.); 12 in the Morgan Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 19 Sep (Matt Spangler); two at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 9 Oct (Tom Austin); and one at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 14 Oct (Doreen Blanchette, Carol Bowman, Linda Jones, Mike McCloy).

Sanderling: Inland sightings included up to eight at the upper end of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 23 Aug through 19 Sep (John Finnegan, m. obs.); one at Buckhorn Reservoir, Wilson Co, NC, 27 Aug (Ricky Davis); one at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 28-31 Aug (Lucas Bobay); one where Richland Creek borders Schenck Forest, Wake Co, 29 Aug (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.); one in the New Hope arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 29 Aug through 7 Sep (Scott Winton, m. obs.); four on the Catawba River in western Mecklenburg Co, NC, 16-18 Sep (Tom Sanders, m. obs.); and two off Farrington Point, Jordan Lake, 19 Sep (Matt Spangler).

Dunlin: Inland sightings included 13 at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 11 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Aaron Steed, Simon Thompson); two at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 14 Oct (Mike McCloy, et al.); one at Shelley Lake, Wake Co, NC, 19 Oct (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.); one at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 23 Oct (Linda Montgomery); two at the Goldsboro WTP, Wayne Co, NC, 24 Oct (Lucas Bobay, et al.); 16 in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 31 Oct (Cherrie Sneed, et al.); and one at the Swann WTP in Forsyth Co, NC, 1 Nov (Phil Dickinson, Shelley Rutkin, et al.).

Baird's Sandpiper: Sightings included one in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, NC, 8-9 Aug (Scott Winton, m. obs.); one at Archie

Elledge WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 20 Aug (John Haire, Shelley Rutkin, et al.); a juvenile in the Ellerbe Creek arm of Falls Lake, 27-28 Aug (Brad Wood, m. obs.); two on Lake Jeanette, Guilford Co, NC, 29 Aug (Henry Link, Nate Swick) through 6 Sep (m. obs.); an adult in the Will Suitt arm of Falls Lake, Durham Co, 30 Aug (Steve Shultz) into September (m. obs.); one at Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, 4-7 Sep (Link, m. obs.); three at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 7 Sep (Ed Blitch, Perry Nugent); three in the Will Suitt arm of Falls Lake, 10 Sep (Mike McCloy); one in the New Hope arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 11 Sep (Loren Hintz, et al.); and one at Lake Surf, eastern Moore Co, NC, 1 Oct (McCloy).

White-rumped Sandpiper: Four at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 4 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Doug Johnston, Tom Tribble) and four at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 14 Oct (Mike McCloy, et al.) were good counts for those sites.

Buff-breasted Sandpiper: Sightings at sod farms included two at Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, 4 Aug (Irvin Pitts); four at Modern Turf near Rembert, Sumter Co, NC, 8 Aug (Lex Glover); and at least one at Super Sod in Orangeburg Co, SC, through much of August and early September (m. obs.). On the mudflats at the upper end of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, after one was found 5 Sep (Scott Winton); a high count of four was made in the Ellerbe Creek arm, 8 Sep (Jan Hansen); and one remained through 18 Sep (Robert Meehan). Up to four were seen at Kiawah Island Golf Resort, Charleston Co, SC, 8-12 Sep (Sean McElaney, Nancy Raginski, Mattie VandenBoom, Casey Weissburg). Individuals were seen at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 2 Sep (Greg Hudson) and at Iswa Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 16 Sep (Kevin Metcalf) through 22 Sep (Metcalf, Tom Sanders, m. obs.).

Pectoral Sandpiper: Six at the campground at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 6 Nov (Elizabeth Wilkins) were somewhat late.

Short-billed Dowitcher: Inland sightings included one on the upper end of Lake Norman in Catawba Co, NC, 11-13 Aug (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby); one on Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 8 Sep (Rob Van Epps) through 12 Sep (Kevin Metcalf); and one at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 23 Aug (Edward Landi). At the upper end of Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, after one was found 15 Aug (John Finnegan), a high count of seven was made 30 Aug (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.), and two remained through 12 Sep (David Howell). At the upper end of Jordan Lake in Chatham Co, NC, after three were found in the Morgan Creek arm, 7 Sep (Eddie Owens), five in were seen in the New Hope arm, 11 Sep (Loren Hintz, et al.), a fantastic count of 25 was made 20 Sep (Will Cook, Mark Kosiewski, et al.).

Wilson's Phalarope: Sightings included two on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 4 Aug (David McLean, Irvin Pitts, Nolan



Black-legged Kittiwake, 29 Nov 2015, Wake Co, NC. Photo by Lucas Bobay.

Schillerstrom); one at the Modern Turf farm near Rembert, Sumter Co, NC, 7 Aug (Steve Patterson); and one on Bull Island, 17 Sep (McLean, et al.). Interestingly, none were found in NC this fall.

Red-necked Phalarope: Individuals at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 2 Sep (Greg Hudson) and at the Silver Bluff Audubon Center, Aiken Co, SC, 19 Sep (Drew Grainger) were great finds. Four at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, during heavy flooding, 3 Oct (Wayne Forsythe) provided the highest count ever made in the mountain region. Two remained at that site through 6 Oct (Jay Wherley).

Pomarine Jaeger: One well-seen just past the breakers at Caswell Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 27 Nov (Ricky Davis) was unusual, as almost all jaegers seen from shore are Parasitic Jaegers.

Parasitic Jaeger: “From-shore” sightings included one off Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 23 Oct (Al Batt, Ricky Davis, Jeff Pippen); a dark-morph bird off North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 26 Oct (Gilbert Grant); one off Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, 15 Nov (Jan Hansen); one off Caswell Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 26 Nov (David); three off Caswell Beach, 27 Nov (Davis); and one off Kill Devil Hills, Dare Co, 28 Nov (Grant). Most observers noted that the jaegers were harassing gulls.

Black-legged Kittiwake: A first-year bird photographed at Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 11 Sep (Doug Johnston) provided our first record of this oceanic species for the mountain region. Another Tarrock, this one possibly sick or injured, seen and photographed on the Beaver Dam portion of Falls Lake, Wake Co, NC, 29 Nov (Harry LeGrand, m. obs.) provided our first record for the Piedmont.

Franklin’s Gull: A large migratory movement of Franklin’s Gulls down

the east coast this fall resulted in a higher-than-usual number of sightings in the Carolinas. Sightings included six, the second-highest count ever made in the Carolinas, on Lake Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 13 Oct (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby); one on Lake Townsend, Guilford Co, NC, 13 Oct (Andrew Thornton, m. obs.); a first-year bird at the Jacksonville WTP, Onslow Co, NC, 20 Oct (John Fussell); two immature birds at Shalotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 25 Oct (Jamie Adams, Sam Cooper, Sherry Lane); one photographed at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 9 Nov (Mark Kosiewski); a first-winter bird photographed at Waites Island, Horry Co, SC, 14 Nov (Chris Hill); two on the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 15 Nov (Derb Carter); an adult around Breach Inlet, Charleston Co, SC, 18 Nov (Matthew Campbell, et al.) and 20 Nov (Craig Watson); and an adult at Caswell Beach, Brunswick Co, 26 Nov (Ricky Davis).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: 22 at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 5 Oct (John Fussell) was a good count for that area. A first-winter bird photographed at the Super Sod farm along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, during heavy flooding, 7 Oct (Doug Johnston), and remaining through 6 Nov (Wayne Forsythe), was a first for the mountain region.

Sooty Tern: Several impressive counts were made on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in early August—33 on 7 Aug; 38 on 8 Aug; and 28 on 14 Aug (Brian Patteson, et al.). An adult seen off the Folly Beach Fishing Pier, Charleston Co, SC, flying southeast towards Bird Key, 20 Aug (Dennis Forsythe) may have bred in that area.

Caspian Tern: 16 on Lake Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 21 Sep (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby) was a good count for a site in the western Piedmont. High counts at sites along the coast included 123 at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 26 Sep (Sam Cooper); 148 at New River Inlet, Onslow Co, NC, 29 Sep (Gilbert Grant); and 56 at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 20 Oct (Paul Serridge).

Black Tern: 146 at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Sep (Sam Cooper, Harry Sell) was a good count. Locally unusual was one at Shiloh Airport, Rockingham Co, NC, 11 Aug (Marty Wall); two on Lake Wylie in York Co, SC, 22 Aug (Stephen Thomas); and three at Chapel Hill Country Club, Orange Co, NC, 31 Aug (Jan Hansen). One on Rankin Lake, Gaston Co, NC, 21 Sep (Steve Tracy) was somewhat late.

Roseate Tern: One found amongst a large flock of roosting terns on the south side of Rich Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 14 Sep (Derb Carter) was a great, unexpected find.

Common Tern: 85, along with 15 Forster's Terns, over Lake Hickory, border of Alexander Co and Catawba Co, NC, 10 Oct (Dwayne Martin, Monroe Parnell) was a remarkable count for a site away from the coast. The next day, 87, along with six Forster's Terns, were seen over Jordan Lake, Chatham Co,



White-winged Dove, 28 Nov 2015, New Hanover Co, NC.

Photo by Sam Cooper

NC, 11 Oct (Ricky Davis). Because such large flocks of Common Terns over inland lakes are so unusual, it's likely both sightings were of the same flock of terns. Other notable inland counts were 13 over Lake Norman in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 13 Sep (Jeff Lemons, et al.); 12 over Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 2 Oct (Nathan Gatto); ten over Mountain Island Lake, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 4 Oct (Kevin Metcalf); and six over the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 4 Oct (Tom Austin). 230 on Bird Shoal, Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Sep (John Fussell) was a good count for this species which is declining in our region.

Forster's Tern: 17 on Lake Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 27 Oct (Dwayne Martin) was a good count for site in the western Piedmont during late October.

Sandwich Tern: 550+ at Cape Fear, Bald Head Island, Brunswick Co, NC, 14 Nov (Sam Cooper) was a noteworthy count for mid-November.

Black Skimmer: Our region's high count was 1200 at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 17 Nov (Sam Cooper).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: One on Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Aug (John Fussell, et al.) was noteworthy for an area devoid of human settlement. 90+ on power-lines in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 31 Oct (Fussell) and 75 in Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, 21 Nov (Pam Ford) were impressive counts.

White-winged Dove: This vagrant made an unprecedented irruption along our coast in late October. In Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, after one was found on a power-line amongst Collared-Doves, 19 Oct (Don Faulkner, Paul Serridge), four were seen near the intersection of Sundial Drive and Lazy Lane, 24-30 Oct (Pam Ford, Cherrie Sneed, Craig Watson, m. obs.), and three remained through at least 21 Nov (Ford, et al.). Also found amongst Collared-

Doves was one on a power-line in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 30 Oct through 2 Nov (John Fussell, m. obs.); six on power-lines in Edisto Beach, Colleton Co, SC, 9 Nov (Susan Moody); and one in the parking lot for the Battleship North Carolina, New Hanover Co, NC, 27-29 Nov (John Ennis, m. obs.). Individuals visited feeders on James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 15-21 Oct (Barbara Spence); in Sneads Ferry, Onslow Co, NC, 30 Oct (Gilbert Grant); in downtown Wilmington, New Hanover Co, 31 Oct (Ben Watkins); in Waves, Dare Co, NC, 31 Oct through 10 Nov (Karen Lebing); in Meggett, Charleston Co, 1 Nov (Sneed); and on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 1 Nov (Tammy Hester). Two frequented a feeder in Kill Devil Hills, Dare Co, 21 Nov into December (Jim Gould). Also, individuals were seen on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 30 Oct (Dennis Hargrove); in flight over Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, 14 Nov (Lucas Bobay); and along the entrance road to the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, 20-24 Nov (Bobby Koch, m. obs.). Most sightings were documented with photographs.

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: One mist-netted, banded, and released on the west end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 17 Nov (Michael Gamble, et al.) was late to depart.

Black-billed Cuckoo: Locally unusual were individuals on the west end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, where mist-netted, banded, and then released, 15 Aug (Aaron Given, et al.); at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 11 Oct (Chris Peak); on the campus of UNC-Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 11 Oct (Sam Cooper); and at Congaree NP, Richland



Burrowing Owl, 05 Nov 2015,
New Hanover Co, NC.
Photo by Janie Adams.



Buff-bellied Hummingbird, 22 Sept 2015, Forsyth Co, NC.
Photo by David Disher.

Co, SC, 17 Oct (John Grego, et al.).

Burrowing Owl: One seen and photographed around a jetty at the north end of Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 4 Nov (fide Derb Carter) through 6 Nov (m. obs.) provided NC with its third definitive record of this species.

Common Nighthawk: One with a badly injured wing found in Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret Co, NC, was taken to a wildlife rehabilitator where it had to be euthanized, 4 Nov (fide John Fussell). November is late for this species in the Carolinas.

Chimney Swift: 13000 roosting at Vienna Elementary School in Forsyth Co, NC, 17 Sep (Phil Dickinson) was a notable concentration.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: 20+ were set to over-winter in a yard with multiple feeders in Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 22 Nov (Ann Maddock).

Rufous Hummingbird: An immature male was banded in a yard in Southern Pines, Moore Co, NC, 13 Nov (Mike McCloy, et al.).

Buff-bellied Hummingbird: One seen and photographed by many at feeders along Royall Drive in Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, 22 Sep into winter (Susan Campbell, Bill & Mindy Conner, m. obs.) provided NC with its second definitive record.

Red-cockaded Woodpecker: One photographed at Jordan Lake State Educational Forest in Chatham Co, NC, 9 Oct (Natalie Barbour, W.S. Barbour) was seen in the company of a second individual 12 Oct (Mark Kosiewski) through 31 Oct (Will Cook). One remained in that area through at least 14 Nov (Kosiewski). Before this sighting, it had been more than two decades since this endangered species was last seen in the Greater Triangle area.

Merlin: Individuals at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 Aug (Sam Cooper) and in agricultural field near West Craven Middle School, Craven Co, NC, 1 Sep (Al Gamache) were somewhat early. Locally unusual were individuals at Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 15 Sep (Rick Knight); at North Wake Landfill District Park, Wake Co, NC, 6-15 Nov (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.); and at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 27-29 Nov (Paul Serridge, m. obs.).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Individuals were seen along the Lenoir Greenway, Caldwell Co, NC, 3 Sep (Dwayne Martin); at the bridge over Eastatoe Creek near Sunset, Pickens Co, SC, 14 Sep (Steve Compton, Claire Herzog, et al.); at Lake Surf in eastern Moore Co, NC, 15 Sep (Mike McCloy); at Mount Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, NC, 19 Sep (Ricky Davis, David Howell, et al.); and at Glenburnie Quarry (limited access), Craven Co, NC, 15 Oct (Al Gamache, Steve Shaffer).

Eastern Wood-Pewee: One seen along Laurel Hill Wildlife Drive at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 7 Nov (Pam Ford, Irvin Pitts, et al.) was somewhat late.

Yellow-bellied Flycatcher: Individuals were seen at Carolina Beach SP, New Hanover Co, NC, 14 Sep (Jamie Adams, Greg Massey); in the Thornburg Tract of Uwharrie NF, Randolph Co, NC, 16 Sep (Andrew Thornton); near Falls Lake in Wake Co, NC, 16 Sep (Josh Southern); at Caw Caw Interpretive Center, Charleston Co, SC, 18 Sep (Keith McCullough); along the Six Mile Greenway in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 19 Sep (Tom Sanders, Rob Van Epps); at Historic Bethabara Park, Forsyth Co, NC, 23-30 Sep (David & Susan Disher, John Haire, m. obs.); and at Jackson Park, Henderson Co, NC, 30 Sep (Ron Selvey). An immature bird mist-netted, banded, and released on the west end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 30 Oct (Sean McElaney) was somewhat late.

Alder Flycatcher: Three were mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, this fall—hatch-year individuals 3 Sep, 15 Sep, and 17 Sep (Sean McElaney, Nancy Raginski, Casey Weissburg, et al.). 42 “Traill’s” Flycatchers were also captured during the period, but could not be definitively identified to species, and were more likely to be Willow Flycatchers.

Western Kingbird: One photographed on a fence along Kapp Rd in Forsyth Co, NC, 14 Aug (Cynthia Donaldson, et al.) was somewhat early, a first for that county, and very unusual for a site in the western Piedmont. Less unusual were multiple transients in the Coastal Plain in October—one photographed near Hemingway, Williamsburg Co, SC, 7 Oct (Jay Chandler); one at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 13 Oct (Ed Dombrowski, Steven Howell, Lou Teer); one on the power-line along the entrance road to the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 15 Oct (Andy Mason); two along that entrance



Gray Kingbird, 03 Oct 2015, Wake Co, NC. Photo by Lucas Bobay.

road, 16 Oct (Nathan Gatto); one in the “sparrow field” on the western side of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, 18 Oct (Brian Bockhahn); one at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 24 Oct (Lee Adams, Jeff Pippen, m. obs.); and one along Milltail Rd at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 25 Oct (Jeff Lewis, et al.).

Eastern Kingbird: Two of the higher concentrations of migrants were 170 at Patriot’s Point, Charleston Co, SC, 5 Sep (Pam Ford) and 123 within a 15 minute span at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Sep (Sam Cooper).

Gray Kingbird: One seen and photographed at Yates Millpond County Park and along adjacent Mid-Pines Rd in Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, 3 Oct (John Finnegan, Lucas Bobay) was only the third ever documented outside the Coastal Plain in NC. Along the southern coast of SC, the area of our region where sightings are most likely, individuals were seen on the Isle of Palms, Charleston Co, 3 Sep (Michael Abrams); on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, 5 Oct (Tammy Hester); and at Ft Moultrie, Charleston Co, 10 Oct (Shelley Watson Keenan, Craig Watson, et al.) and 11 Oct (Alex Dopp).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: Individuals were seen and photographed in Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, 24 Oct (Jay Gamble, et al.); at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 4 Nov (Marie D’Auteuil, Harry Sell) through 6 Nov (Sherry Lane); and at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 19 Nov (Amy Clark Courtney, Cherrie Sneed).

Philadelphia Vireo: Two at the southern end of Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 13 Sep (Andrew Thornton) were nice finds. Multiple sightings were made at Beaver Lake, Buncombe Co, NC, 17 Sep (Aaron Steed) through 6 Oct (Doug Johnston), with a high count of three birds on 30 Sep (Jay Wherley). One seen on a farm in Williamsburg Co, SC, 23 Nov (Catherine Gamble, Jay Gamble) was incredibly late, though regrettably not photographed.

Common Raven: Locally unusual were four over US-1 in Sanford, Lee Co, NC, 3 Sep (Kyle Kittelberger) and two over Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 17 Sep (David Howell).

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: Two amongst Tree Swallows in Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, 10 Nov (David McCorquodale) were rather late.

Cave Swallow: Multiple sightings were made at sites along the coast in late November—two along the dunes at Coquina Beach, Dare Co, NC, 15 Nov (Ricky Davis); one at the North River Preserve, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Nov (John Fussell, Nell Moore); one amongst Tree Swallows near the southern end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 21 Nov (Ed Corey); two to three at Myrtle Beach SP, Horry Co, SC, 21 Nov (Jay Chandler, Scott Hartley, et al.); four at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 21 Nov (Pam Ford, Andy Harrison); one amongst Tree Swallows in North Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, 24 Nov (Joe Gyekis); two in Pine Knoll Shores, Carteret Co, 24 Nov (Moore); 12 to 15 along the dunes at North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 24 Nov (Gilbert Grant); three along the dunes at Caswell Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 26 Nov (Davis); and 11 on Sullivan's Island, Charleston Co, 27 Nov (William Hutcheson).

Barn Swallow: Late to depart were eight at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 6 Nov (Andre Coquerel); two at Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 8 Nov (John Fussell); two at Edisto Beach SP, Charleston Co, SC, 10 Nov (Susan Moody); two at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 14 Nov (Sam Cooper); one at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 15 Nov (Mike Stewart, et al.); and four at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, 21 Nov (Cooper).

Winter Wren: Somewhat early for a site in the Piedmont was a singing individual along the Black Walnut Bottom Trail in Bethania, Forsyth Co, NC, 28 Sep (Phil Dickinson, Shelley Rutkin, et al.).

Sedge Wren: Locally unusual was one along Brandon Oaks Nature Path in Union Co, NC, 30 Sep (Martina Nordstrand); one in the ditch along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, for several days in early October (Wayne Forsythe); and two along Baldwin Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 28 Oct (Nate Swick, Andrew Thornton).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Somewhat late for inland sites were individuals at Ebenezer Point, Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 15-18 Nov (Lucas Bobay, Neil Skoog, et al.); at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 16 Nov (Jane Kramer); on the southeastern shore of Lake Murray, Lexington Co, SC, 25 Nov (Irvin Pitts); along Gay Rd in western Edgecombe Co, NC, 29 Nov (Ricky Davis); and at Boyd Pond Park, Aiken Co, SC, 29 Nov (Peter Stangel).

Townsend's Solitaire: Possibly the most exciting find of the season was that of a Townsend's Solitaire at the Swinging Bridge on Grandfather Mountain, Avery Co, NC, 13 Aug (Curtis Smalling). Many birders saw the solitaire through 18 Aug (Mark Kosiewski, m. obs.) until it wasn't seen

despite hours of searching 19 Aug (Jesse Pope, et al.). Amazingly, the solitaire reappeared in the same area 8 Sep (Pope) where it was seen by many through 14 Sep (Audrey Whitlock). These sightings provided the first record of this western species in NC.

Swainson's Thrush: One photographed at Botany Bay Plantation WMA, Charleston Co, SC, 1 Nov (Nancy Williamson) was late to depart.

Wood Thrush: One mist-netted, banded, and released on the eastern end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 13 Nov (Casey Weissburg) was somewhat late.

Sage Thrasher: Another rare vagrant from the western United States visiting our region this fall was Sage Thrasher. Discovered on the edge of the cattle pasture on the southern side of Warren Wilson College, Buncombe Co, NC, 31 Oct (James Poling, Steve Yurkovich), it was seen and photographed by many until last seen 6 Nov (Tom Ledford, Mark McShane). This bird provided NC with its third definitive record.

Snow Bunting: One was photographed on the northeastern beach of Bald Head Island, Brunswick Co, NC, 14 Nov (Sam Cooper).

Ovenbird: One lingered in a yard in Carrboro, Orange Co, NC, 25 Nov through 15 Dec (Jan Hansen).

Swainson's Warbler: One mist-netted, banded, and released on the western end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 7 Oct (Sean McElaney) was somewhat late.

Nashville Warbler: Sightings made in the eastern half of our region, where more noteworthy, included one in Leesburg, Richland Co, SC, 13 Sep (Lex



Sage Thrasher, 31 Oct 2015, Buncombe Co, NC. Photo by James Poling.



Snow Bunting, 14 Nov 2015, Brunswick Co, NC. Photo by Sam Cooper.

Glover); one at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 14 Sep (Jeff Lewis); one along Mid-Pines Rd, Wake Co, NC, 27 Sep (Brian Pendergraft); two near the lower end of Falls Lake, Wake Co, 6 Oct (Kyle Kittelberger); one at the boardwalk in Duck, Dare Co, 12-17 Oct (Jim Gould, Lewis, m. obs.); one at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 13-15 Oct (Steve Howell, m. obs.); and one photographed at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 25 Oct (Chandra Biggerstaff). Individuals were mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 27 Sep, 6 Oct, and 16 Oct (Sean McElaney, Casey Weissburg, et al.). One found amongst a flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 14 Nov (Jack Colcolough) was quite late.

Connecticut Warbler: One well-seen along the Lenoir Greenway in Caldwell Co, NC, 25 Aug (Dwayne Martin) was very early.

American Redstart: Late to depart were individuals in northern Wake Co, NC, 2 Nov (Kevin Durso); at Patriot's Point, Charleston Co, SC, 8 Nov (Pam Ford); and at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 12 Nov (Marie D'Auteuil).

Northern Parula: One mist-netted, banded, and released on the western end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 15 Nov (Michael Gamble) was quite late. Another individual seen along the Tar River Trail at Battle Park, Nash Co, NC, 29 Nov (David Howell) was very late, possibly attempting to over-winter.

Magnolia Warbler: One lingering along the NC-94 causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 21 Nov (Derb Carter) may have been attempting to over-winter there.

Blackburnian Warbler: One found amongst a flock of Yellow-rumped Warblers on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 14 Nov (Jack Colcolough) was quite late. Blackburnian Warblers typically depart our region by mid-

October.

Yellow Warbler: One lingering along the NC-94 causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 21 Nov (Derb Carter) may have been attempting to over-winter there.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: A few of the later sightings involved an adult male photographed along Faulkner Rd in York Co, SC, 3 Nov (Steven Biggers); an adult male photographed at a feeder in Dorchester Co, SC, 4 Nov (David Youngblood); an adult female at Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 8 Nov (Ben Nickley); two that were mist-netted, banded, and then released on the western end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 8 Nov (Michael Gamble, et al.); and one mist-netted, banded, and released on the eastern end of Kiawah Island, 11 Nov (Casey Weissburg).

Wilson's Warbler: Individuals were seen on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 13 Sep (Casey Weissburg); on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, 19 Sep (Rick Knight); at Mount Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, NC, 19 Sep (Ricky Davis, David Howell); along the boardwalk in Duck, Dare Co, NC, 8 Oct (Jim Gould); along Brandan Oaks Nature Path in Union Co, NC, 11 Oct (Martina Nordstrand); and at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 15 Oct (Chandra Biggerstaff). An immature male mist-netted, banded, and released on the western end of Kiawah Island, 26 Oct (Nancy Raginski, et al.) was rather late. An adult male lingered at Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary, Buncombe Co, NC, 21 Oct (Aaron Steed, et al.) through 5 Dec, an extremely late date for this species at a site in the mountain region (Simon Thompson).

Yellow-breasted Chat: One mist-netted, banded, and released on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, on the very late date of 20 Nov (Michael Gamble, Nancy Raginski, et al.) was inadvertently recaptured 24 Nov (Aaron Given, Cathy Miller, et al.), suggesting it might have been attempting to over-winter in that area.

Bachman's Sparrow: Five along Sam Hatcher Rd in the southern Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 10 Nov (John Fussell) was a good count for late fall. Fussell notes there had been a prescribed burn in that area during the summer, creating favorable habitat.

Clay-colored Sparrow: Individuals were seen on the eastern end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, where mist-netted, banded, and released, 13 Sep (Michael Gamble, et al.); at Patriot's Point, Charleston Co, 15-18 Sep (Andy Harrison, m. obs.); at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 10 Oct (Steve Calver); along Brandon Oaks Nature Path in Union Co, NC, where photographed, 12 Oct (Martina Nordstrand); in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 15 Oct (Irvin Pitts); on Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Oct (John Fussell, et al.); at the southern end of Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 19 Oct (Brian Bockhahn) through 21 Oct (Ricky Davis); along River Rd at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, 25 Oct (Jeff Pippen); at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 11 Nov (Amy Williamson); and on Roanoke

Island, Dare Co, 24 Nov (Jeff Lewis).

Vesper Sparrow: A few of the better counts were four in a field near Coastal Carolina University, Horry Co, SC, 5 Nov (Chris Hill); seven in Sandy Mush Game Land, Buncombe Co, NC, 5 Nov (Doug Johnston); four at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 10 Nov (Tom Austin); and five at Sutton Lake, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 Nov (Greg Massey).

Lark Sparrow: This regular vagrant was well-reported this fall and, as usual, most sightings were made at sites along the coast. Those sightings included one at Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Aug (John Fussell, et al.); two at that same site, 25 Aug (Nell Moore); one at Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, Dare Co, NC, 28-30 Aug (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.); one on Bull Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, NC, 1 Sep (David McLean, Steve Moore, Irvin Pitts); one on Figure Eight Island, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Sep (Derb Carter); one photographed in Nags Head Woods, Dare Co, 13 Sep (Michael Gosselin); one at the northern end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 16 Sep (Audrey Whitlock), 19 Oct (Brian Bockhahn, et al.), and 11 Nov (Jim Gould); one in the campground at Cape Point, Dare Co, 26 Sep (Gosselin); one at Wrightsville Beach Park, New Hanover Co, 6-7 Oct (Tom Forwood Jr., m. obs.); two at that same location 8 Oct (Ryan Bakelaar); one at Hatteras Landing, Dare Co, 23 Oct (Brian Patteson); one on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, 4 Nov (Lewis); and one photographed at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, 27-28 Nov (Sherry Lane, John Ennis). One photographed near Merchants Millpond SP, Gates Co, NC, 1 Aug (Floyd Williams) was a potential first for that county. Two seen in a pasture adjacent to Schenck Forest, Wake Co, NC, 4 Oct (John Finnegan) were good finds for a site in the Piedmont. Remarkably, four Lark Sparrows were found in Orange Co, NC, this fall—distinct individuals photographed at Mason Farm Biological Preserve, 11 Sep (Mary Sonis) and 14 Oct (Kent Fiala, et al.), and two birds at Maple View Farm, 19 Sep (Jan Hansen, m. obs.).

Grasshopper Sparrow: One photographed at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 10 Nov (Tom Austin) was a great find for a site so far inland in late fall.

Henslow's Sparrow: One of the very few reported during the period was an individual at Ft Moultrie, Charleston Co, SC, 12 Oct (Craig Watson, et al.).

Le Conte's Sparrow: Individuals were seen at Ft Moultrie, Charleston Co, SC, 14 Oct (Craig Watson) and in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 15 Oct (Irvin Pitts).

Nelson's Sparrow: One along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 5 Oct (Luke Cannon, Wayne Forsythe) was a good find for a site away from the coast.

"Nelson's x Saltmarsh" Sparrow: A classic "Sharp-tailed" Sparrow,



Lincoln's Sparrow, 15 Oct 2015, Gaston Co, NC. Photo by Lee Weber.

exhibiting characteristics of both Nelson's Sparrow and Saltmarsh Sparrow, was seen near Ft Sumter, Charleston Co, SC, 24 Oct (Jack Rogers).

Lincoln's Sparrow: Sightings included one at Warren Wilson College, Buncombe Co, NC, 30 Sep (Luke Cannon) through 22 Oct (Aaron Steed) ; one mist-netted, banded, and released on the western end of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 14 Oct (Casey Weissburg); one photographed at River Street Park, Gaston Co, NC, 15 Oct (Lee Weber); three at Price Park in Guilford Co, NC, 15 Oct (Andrew Thornton); one on the eastern end of Kiawah Island, 17 Oct (Sean McElaney, et al.); one photographed at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 18 Oct (Tom Austin); one at Maple View Farm, Orange Co, NC, 18-20 Oct (Jan Hansen, m. obs.); three at Valle Crucis Community Park, Watauga Co, NC, 21 Oct (Martha Cutler, et al.); and two in Butner Game Lands in Durham Co, NC, 25 Oct (Ed Corey, et al.).

White-throated Sparrow: One that visited a feeder in Gaston Co, NC, 20 Aug (Keith Camburn) was very unusual for the month of August.

"Gambel's" White-crowned Sparrow: Individuals of the gambellii race from the western United States were seen in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, an immature bird, 3 Oct (Jeff Lewis) and in Randolph Co, NC, an adult, mist-netted, banded, photographed, and released, 17 Oct (Scott Winton, et al.).

Scarlet Tanager: An adult male in non-breeding plumage at Carvers Creek SP, Cumberland Co, NC, 6 Nov (Mike Stewart) was quite late.

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: A first-fall male at Lake Johnson, Wake Co, NC, 8 Nov (Allen Boynton) was rather late.



Bobolink, 16 Oct 2015, Orange Co, NC. Photo by Jan Hansen.

Blue Grosbeak: A first-winter individual photographed at Socastee Park, Horry Co, SC, 10 Nov (Diana Doyle) was somewhat late, while a female/first-winter individual near the Battleship North Carolina, New Hanover Co, NC, 28 Nov (Sam Cooper) and 29 Nov (Greg Massey) was very late.

Dickcissel: Sightings included two singing birds at North River Preserve, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Aug (John Fussell, et al.); an adult female visiting a feeder with House Sparrows in Waves, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 31 Aug and 12-13 Oct (Karen Lebing); one at McDowell Prairie, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 12 Sep (Ken Kneidel); one in Nags Head, Dare Co, 14 Sep (Jeff Lewis); one at Falls Lake in Wake Co, NC, 16 Sep (Brian Bockhahn); a first-winter female photographed on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 6 Oct (Tammy Hester); one or two first-winter birds at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 7-8 Oct (Linda Montgomery, m. obs.); one at the northern end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 15 Oct (Audrey Whitlock) and 21 Oct (Ricky Davis); and an adult male in non-breeding plumage in Mills River, Henderson Co, NC, 28 Oct (Steve Ritt).

Bobolink: 12100 at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 11 Sep (Jeff Lewis) provided an amazing count. Up to 35 along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 4 Oct (Wayne Forsythe, Doug Johnston) was a good count for the mountain region. Three along Dairyland Rd in Orange Co, 18 Oct (Jan Hansen) and one photographed at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 28 Oct (Linda Montgomery) were somewhat late.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: Sightings included one photographed in a yard in south Litchfield Beach, Georgetown Co, SC, 17 Aug (Bob & Judy



Rusty Blackbird, 27 Nov 2015, New Hanover Co, NC. Photo by John Ennis.

Maxwell); a female visiting a feeder with cowbirds in Waves, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 24 Sep through 6 Oct (Karen Lebing); one photographed amongst a flock of cowbirds and starlings in a field near Lake Landing, Hyde Co, NC, 26 Oct (Lee Adams, Peggy Eubank); and one amongst Red-winged Blackbirds at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, 17 Oct (Louise Barden, Tom Ledford, Penny Soares, Judy Walker).

Rusty Blackbird: 520 in the parking lot for the Battleship North Carolina, New Hanover Co, NC, 28 Nov (Sam Cooper) was an impressive concentration.

Baltimore Oriole: Somewhat early was one in Manteo, Dare Co, NC, 21 Aug (Jeff Lewis); one at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 22 Aug (Sam Cooper); and 13, also a good count, on Cape Lookout NS, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Aug (John Fussell, et al.).

Red Crossbill: This species was present in the Black Mountains and Balsam Mountains in western North Carolina throughout the period. High counts for those two areas were, respectively, 52 on Bald Knob Ridge, southern Yancey Co, 31 Oct (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal) and 31 along the BRP near Bearpen Gap, Haywood Co, 28 Nov (Simpson, Westphal). Westphal also notes that while most calls heard on Bald Knob Ridge were “type 1” calls, at least one “type 2” was heard, and a rare “type 3” call was heard on 31 Oct. Up to ten were seen on Roan Mtn Mitchell Co, NC, 21 Aug-19 Sep (Rick Knight).

Pine Siskin: Large flocks began arriving in the NC mountains in late October, with 92 along the BRP at the border of Buncombe Co and Yancey Co, 24 Oct (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal) and 60 on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, 4 Nov (Rick Knight).

Fifty Years Ago in *The Chat*—March 1966

The lead article published in this issue was a summary of the status of the Fulvous Tree Duck (today known as the Fulvous Whistling-Duck), written by H. Lee Jones, a Charlotte native who was a student at N.C. State at the time. Jones provided a detailed summary of the past and present status of this duck along with a map showing winter records for a sixteen year period along the eastern seaboard. Jones wrote: “Only ten years ago the Fulvous Tree Duck was considered to be an accidental stray anywhere in the United States outside of its breeding range. Today it is an established winter resident from Florida to Virginia and a regular visitor to the Northeast.” He concluded his article with a detailed explanation of the history of this species in the Carolinas. The earliest record was of a specimen collected in the Currituck Sound in July 1886. A few years after this article was published, Lee Jones moved on to graduate school on the west coast and he became an important figure in California birding during the 1970’s. Jones has recently authored the book “Birds of Belize”.

Elizabeth and Bob Teulings reported mist-netting and banding a pair of Worm-eating Warblers in June 1965 at their home in Durham County. The first warbler was an adult male discovered to be in breeding condition with a prominent cloacal protruberance. Three days later they caught a female with a brood patch. The birds were apparently nesting in a “damp wooded area consisting of second-growth deciduous trees and low underbrush”. This provided additional confirmation of the Worm-eating Warbler breeding in the Piedmont.

Earl Hodel provided an interesting report of a mixed flock of swallows that showed up in Elkin on August 30, 1965. The flock was foraging and perching along the Yadkin River. Hodel estimated that the flock was over 1,000 birds in size and he was able to identify Tree, Bank, Rough-winged, Barn, and Cliff Swallows along with Purple Martins. He was especially pleased to see the five Bank Swallows and noted they were the first he had seen in Wilkes County in almost thirty years.

A detailed account of a sighting of Say’s Phoebe in Wake County, authored by Lee Jones, was also included in this issue. Jones provided convincing details of a bird he found on October 23, 1965 while he was studying a flock of water pipits. He had time to sketch the bird in some detail and contacted others to help him collect it - as it would have been a first state record. Unfortunately, a cold front moved in during the night and the bird was never seen again. Jones wrote “it will have to remain on the hypothetical list until a specimen is obtained”.

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The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

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- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
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The Chat

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612



Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

Periodicals Postage Paid
at Pinehurst, NC 28374 and
additional mailing offices

The Chat

Vol. 80

SPRING 2016

No. 2



The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Vol. 80

SPRING 2016

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THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612. Individual subscription price \$25 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Pinehurst, NC and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE CHAT, Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst NC 28374.

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General Field Notes

General Field Notes briefly report such items as rare sightings, unusual behaviors, significant nesting records, or summaries of such items.

First, second, or third sightings of species in either state must be submitted to the appropriate Bird Records Committee prior to publication in The Chat.

First Record of a Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*) for South Carolina

Imtiaz Haque

114 Strode Circle, Clemson, South Carolina 29631

On December 16, 2015, Bunny Goree, an artist and a close friend, found an unusual looking oriole coming to her feeder in Six Mile, South Carolina. It was unlike either of the other orioles, Baltimore (*Icterus galbula*) or Orchard (*Icterus spurius*), she had previously seen. She tried to contact me on December 21, but due to the Christmas holidays was unable to get me until December 28. The bird had since left, but she had taken some fuzzy photos with her iPhone on December 21 that she shared with me. She suspected this was possibly a Scott's Oriole and wanted help confirming her identification.

Ms. Goree had also sent the photos to Phillip Unitt, Curator, Department of Birds and Mammals at San Diego Natural History Museum. Unitt thought that it could possibly be a Scott's Oriole (*Icterus parisorum*) but could not confirm due to the lack of clarity in the pictures. Ms. Goree and I discussed the possibility of this being a Baltimore, Orchard, or Audubon's Oriole (*Icterus graduacauda*) over the phone. However, based on her excellent and detailed descriptions/observations, consultations with the Sibley Guide (Sibley 2000), and discussions about size, shape, and field marks, I concurred with her assessment that this bird was probably a Scott's Oriole, a very unusual sighting in the Carolinas. However, a more definitive identification was needed. This was citizen science at work and Ms. Goree deserves great credit for her excellent observations and persistence.

The bird reappeared on her property on January 1, 2016, at which point Ms. Goree contacted me and I went to Six Mile to see the bird. The bird appeared at her suet feeder at 1:00 pm and remained for over 1.5 hrs. I was located at a distance of approximately 15 ft from the feeder for most of the time the bird was there. I had the opportunity to photograph it (Figures 1 and 2) and clearly identify markings that established it as an adult male Scott's Oriole. The three candidate birds (Audubon's, Baltimore, and Orchard) were firmly ruled out based on the following: It was medium sized, broad-necked bird, larger than an Orchard Oriole with a black beak finely pointed at the end, typical of the

Icterus genus. It had a black head, throat, and chest, with a mottled black and yellow back (a bit unusual) that Ms. Goree describes as a ‘brocade’.



Figure 1. Scott's Oriole at feeder - Six Mile, South Carolina. Photograph by Imtiaz Haque.



Figure 2. Scott's Oriole at feeder - showing undertail markings. Photograph by Imtiaz Haque.

The rest of the body was lemon yellow including the under-tail coverts. The wings were black with a white wing bar and a yellow upper epaulet. The outer tail feathers were yellow at the base for half their length and black for the other half. A male Audubon's Oriole has a yellow back and a black tail. A male Baltimore Oriole has a flame orange chest. Females and immature male Baltimore Orioles have yellow-orange breasts, grayish on the head and back, and two bold white wing bars. Adult Orchard Oriole males are black above and reddish-chestnut below. They have a black head and throat. Females are greenish yellow with two white wing bars and no black. Immature males look like females, but have black around the bill and throat.

I contacted Dr. Christopher E. Hill, Biology Department, Coastal Carolina University and chair of the South Carolina Bird Records Committee on January 1, 2016 and submitted photographs of the bird. He concurred with our conclusions based on the photographs I submitted. I also spoke with Dr. Drew Lanham, Professor of Ornithology at Clemson University who was very enthusiastic about the sighting. A record of this sighting was submitted to *ebird.org* and accepted. A report was submitted to the South Carolina Bird Records Committee and was accepted (Record # 2016-001). News of the sighting was made available to the birding community through social media and email, with permission from the homeowner. Ms. Goree was very gracious about opening up her home to birders. Since that time, 55 birders from South Carolina, Tennessee, Georgia, and North Carolina have seen the bird. The bird was seen every day till January 7 and then sporadically until January 14 at which point it left. The bird was seen again on February 14 and 15 and was not seen since.

The Scott's Oriole is a fairly common and widespread breeding bird in arid lands. It breeds in scattered locations across the southern half of California, Nevada, Utah, western Colorado, southwest Wyoming, Arizona, western and southern New Mexico and trans-Pecos Texas, extending to central Texas and then south into Mexico. Almost all U.S. breeders winter in Mexico but a few are found in southern California (Dunne 2006). Records of Scott's Oriole sightings in the Eastern United States are very sparse. Records exist for Georgia (Boehm and Boehm 2002), Kentucky (Palmer-Ball 2007), Pennsylvania (Johnson 2007), New York (Wilson et al. 2009), and North Carolina (LeGrand et.al. 2009). There is no prior record of this species in South Carolina.

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The Distribution, Persistence, and Habitat Associations of Bachman's Sparrow (*Peucaea aestivalis*) in North Carolina

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Abstract

The primary objective for this study was to develop a comprehensive, high-resolution map of the distribution of Bachman's Sparrow (*Peucaea aestivalis*) in North Carolina. We reviewed aerial photography within the species' range to identify potential habitat and selected 1,511 locations to survey for sparrows. In addition, we compiled all historical records (prior to 2007) available and resampled these locations ($n=80$) to determine sparrow persistence. Finally, we added an additional 252 locations where suitable habitat was identified in the field for a total of 1,843 potential survey locations. We were able to visit 1,503 of these locations in the field, but only 929 of them (62%) were determined to have habitat suitable to support sparrows. At these 929 points we conducted 8-minute point-count surveys during the breeding seasons of 2012-2014, with and without Bachman's Sparrow song playback. We detected Bachman's Sparrows at 196 of the 929 (21%) surveyed points. Our results indicate this species is largely restricted to several large, fire-maintained pine woodlands in the Sandhills and southern Coastal Plain. We did encounter some birds at sites far from these core areas and in sub-optimal habitat (e.g., young pine stands, fire suppressed stands), but these instances were rare. We detected sparrows at only 9 of the historic locations (11%), strongly suggesting this species' range has continued to contract in recent decades, and it is now absent from the eastern Piedmont outside of the Sandhills. As expected, we observed Bachman's Sparrows presence to be strongly correlated with both recent fire, and moderate to high herbaceous groundcover. However, unlike in other parts of their range, sparrow use of powerline corridors, recent clearcuts, and abandoned fields appears to be rare, despite apparently suitable vegetation conditions. Future restoration and management of Bachman's Sparrow habitat should be focused on augmenting extant populations by creating and maintaining open-canopy conditions in pine-dominated forests and promoting herbaceous cover through the use of prescribed fire.

Introduction

Bachman's Sparrow (*Peucaea aestivalis*), a ground-dwelling sparrow



Bachman's Sparrow, 28 April 2016. Photo by John Carpenter.

endemic to the southeastern United States (Dunning 2006), is closely associated with the dense, herbaceous groundcover typically found in fire-maintained longleaf pine (*Pinus palustris*) forest, as well as pine savannah and other early successional habitats (Dunning and Watts 1990, Jones et al. 2013). Because of these habitat associations, Bachman's Sparrow often serves as a focal species for studies evaluating management and restoration of longleaf pine ecosystems, along with the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*; Rutledge and Conner 2002, Tucker et al. 2004)

Like many other species associated with fire-maintained herbaceous cover, Bachman's Sparrows have consistently declined over the past several decades across their range, largely in response to habitat loss and degradation in the absence of fire (Dunning 2006). According to the United States Geological Survey Breeding Bird Survey, this species has experienced a range-wide annual decline of 3.1% (95%CI: -4.1, -2.1) since 1966 (Sauer et al. 2012). However, the species' status is classified as "category 2" under the Endangered Species Act, meaning federal protection may be warranted, but insufficient evidence exists for formal designation. Following the extirpation of this species from the state of Virginia in recent decades (Watts pers. comm.), North Carolina harbors the northernmost breeding population. As such, our state currently marks the front lines of the effort to reverse the continued decline and range contraction.

Bachman's Sparrows still can be readily found in North Carolina on large blocks of frequently burned longleaf pine forests such as those on Sandhills Game Lands, Fort Bragg Military Installation, Holly Shelter Game Land, Camp LeJeune Marine Corps Base, and Croatan National Forest (LeGrand 2013), but the species has been observed infrequently away from conservation lands in recent decades (pers. obs.). Virtually all research on this species has

focused on public lands, whereas the distribution on private lands is largely undocumented, (but see Taillie et al. 2015). Previous studies outside North Carolina describe the use of treeless dry prairie (Shriver et al. 1999), clearcuts (Haggerty 1988, Dunning et al. 1995, Watts et al. 1998, Cox pers. comm.), young pine plantations (Haggerty 1998, Watts et al. 1998, Cox pers. comm.), and utility rights-of-way (Dunning et al. 1995) by Bachman's Sparrows; however, but use of these habitats (hereafter referred to as "secondary habitats") in North Carolina have been rare in recent years (pers. obs.). Though Bachman's Sparrows have been observed using several of these secondary habitats in the past in North Carolina, including two singing males in a young longleaf pine clearcut and one singing male in the treeless Rhine-Luzon Drop Zone of Fort Bragg Military Installation (McNair, unpubl. data), the extent to which these habitats are used today remains unclear. In light of the continued conservation concern of longleaf pine forest (Oswalt et al. 2012), as well as a recent proposal to elevate the state-level conservation status of Bachman's Sparrow from "special concern species," to "threatened" (Gerwin et al. 2011), a more comprehensive understanding of this species' distribution and use of secondary habitats on private lands will complement current research on public lands and serve to guide management and restoration of longleaf pine ecosystems state-wide.

Currently, the North Carolina Gap Analysis Project (NCGAP) Vertebrate Predicted Distribution Map is the only source for a comprehensive state-wide distribution of Bachman's Sparrows at a resolution finer than the county level (<http://www.basinc.ncsu.edu/ncgap/sppreport/abpbx91050.html>). Though this map incorporates observations of Bachman's Sparrows to inform the model of predicted occurrence, these observations are both geographically limited and temporally variable (see Methods). This study attempts to refine the NCGAP predicted distribution of Bachman's Sparrows by conducting on-the-ground surveys of sparrows throughout the known range with a focus on privately owned and otherwise under-surveyed lands. Our objectives were to 1) develop a current map of Bachman's Sparrow breeding distribution in NC, 2) assess persistence of the species at sites where they were historically observed, 3) document habitat use, including use of secondary habitats, and 4) model the temporal variation in sparrow detection. To achieve these objectives, we systematically identified and surveyed Bachman's Sparrow habitat across its known range in NC. Our results greatly improve the ability to monitor and manage for Bachman's Sparrows in the future and will aid in the development of a state-wide conservation plan to mitigate, and ultimately reverse, its continued decline.

Field Site Description

We limited our study to the known range of Bachman's Sparrows in North

Carolina as approximated by the NCGAP Vertebrate Predicted Distribution Map. This range included southeastern North Carolina east of the Uwharrie Mountains and parts of northeastern North Carolina in the eastern Piedmont and inner Coastal Plain (Fig. 1). The forested areas of the Sandhills and the southern Coastal Plain are largely comprised of pine-dominated forest, whereas Northern Fall Line forests include pine, hardwood, and mixed-canopy forests. Outside of forested areas, these regions are largely comprised of varying levels of urban development and row crop agriculture.

Methods

We followed a systematic process to generate the most current and comprehensive breeding distribution map of Bachman’s Sparrow in NC by 1) resampling historic records to evaluate site persistence, 2) evaluating aerial photography throughout its range to identify potential breeding habitat, and 3) conducting on-the-ground field observations to verify conditions at potential habitat sites and presence of Bachman’s Sparrows.

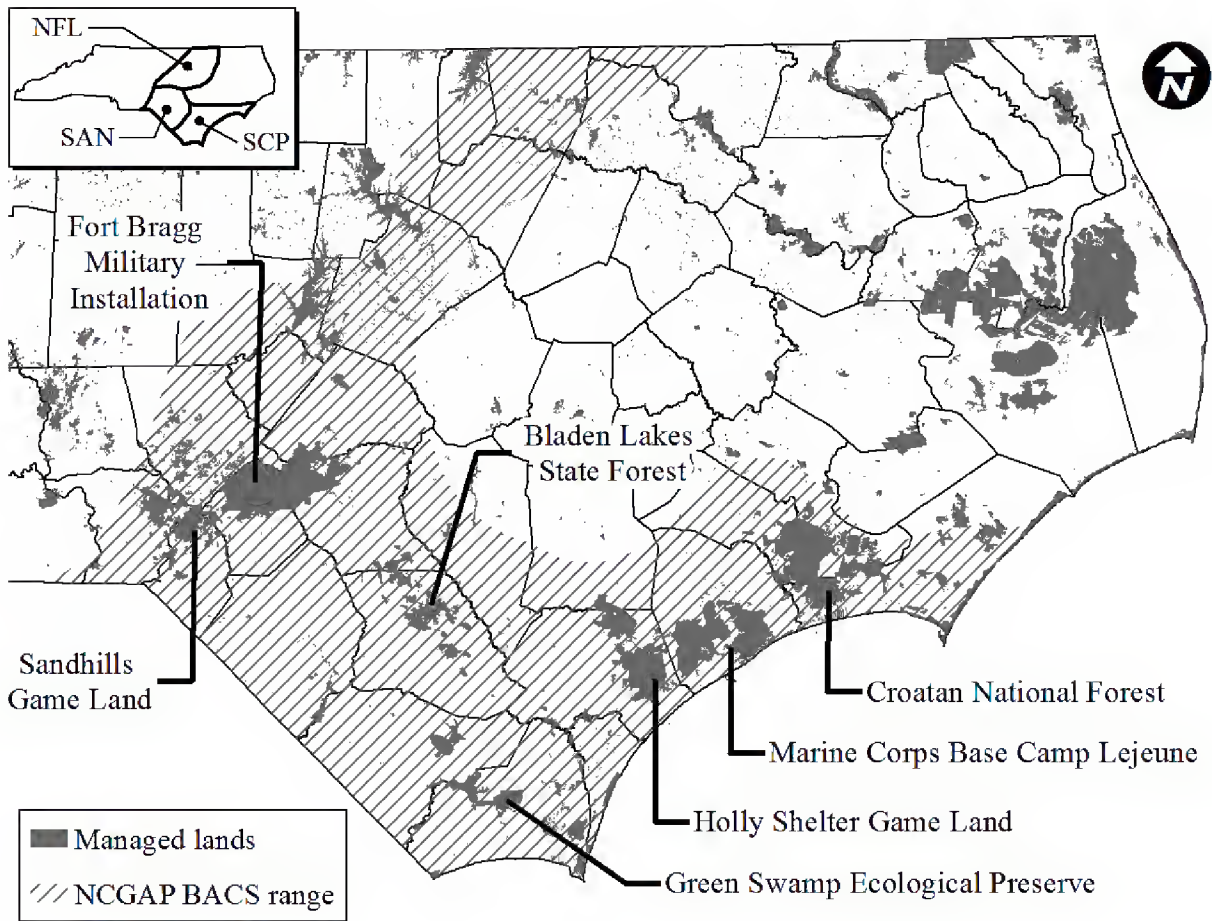


Figure 1. The North Carolina Gap Analysis (NCGAP) Project’s estimate Bachman’s Sparrow range is shown with the distribution of public lands across the region. The inset map shows the extent of the Northern Fall-line (NFL), Sandhills (SAN), and Southern Coastal Plain (SCP) sub-regions.

Site Selection

As a reference of historical distribution and to evaluate site persistence, we used all available existing breeding season (April – July) records of Bachman's Sparrows from the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences, US Forest Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and eBird (Sullivan et al. 2009). We resurveyed all observations ($n = 80$) collected prior to the 2007 breeding season, and hereafter refer to these as historical observations.

Because historical observations were limited and derived from localized bird surveys conducted primarily on public lands, we interpreted recent aerial photography and placed additional sampling locations in suitable habitat with an emphasis on private lands. We first divided the known range into a grid of 1,050 USGS quarter quadrangles (hereafter: "quarter-quads"), each with an area of 3,952 ha using ArcGIS™ v.10 (Environmental Systems Research Institute, Redlands, California, USA). At a scale of 1:10,000 to 1:16,000, we examined every quarter-quad in the Sandhills and Southern Coastal Plain regions (excluding Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune and portions of Holly Shelter, Sandhills Game Lands, and Croatan National Forest, which were concurrently surveyed as part of other research projects; Fig. 1). We randomly selected 25% of the total quarter quads in the Northern Fall Line region to review because the likelihood of encountering a sparrow in this region is currently low (LeGrand 2013). For the purposes of this study, we focused our effort largely on identifying open pine woodlands; however, we did evaluate clearcuts and abandoned fields >50 acres, and powerline habitats >50 m wide if present within a matrix of apparent open pine habitat to determine if Bachman's Sparrows were also using these habitat types in NC. We placed a maximum of 16 points per quarter-quad while ensuring a minimum distance of 500 m between points. To facilitate access, 27% of the total selected points were situated <50 m from a paved road. Using this approach, we generated a total of 1,511 points: 1,250 in open pine habitat, 202 in clearcuts/abandoned fields, and 59 in powerline corridors.

We obtained permission to survey all points on public lands and properties owned by private conservation organizations (e.g. The Nature Conservancy). Permission to access survey locations on private property was solicited from 298 landowners using a combination of letter requests, phone calls, and emails. We received permission from 146 landowners (49%), were denied permission by 30 landowners (10%), and received no response from 122 landowners (41%). We were unable to survey 28 points on private land for which we were granted permission (19%) because of logistical constraints.

We ground-truthed each of the 1,511 points to verify the existence of suitable Bachman's Sparrow habitat, and to also locate additional habitat not identified

during investigation of aerial imagery. While conducting field surveys, we added survey points in the field if we encountered suitable Bachman's Sparrow habitat >500 m away from any existing survey point. We defined suitable as occurring within a minimum 2-ha patch of contiguous habitat comprised of >20% cover of native herbaceous vegetation (i.e. bunch grasses, forbs, etc.) with a sparse midstory. Points failing to meet these criteria were not surveyed for sparrows, and the reason for rejection was recorded, including closed canopy, dense midstory, conversion to other land use, or recent disturbance (e.g., controlled burn within the past 1-3 months). In summary, we generated a total of 1,843 survey points to potentially survey for Bachman's Sparrows: 1,511 via aerial imagery, 252 while in the field, and 80 based on historical observations.

Sparrow Surveys

Points were surveyed for sparrows using an infinite-radius point-count protocol during the months of April and May in 2012-2014, within 4.5 hr of sunrise on mornings without precipitation or excessive wind. At points that met the criteria for suitable habitat, the observer conducted a "passive" 4-min point-count survey, recording the estimated distance and direction to all detected Bachman's Sparrows, as well as the habitat type in which they were found: open longleaf pine forest, open forest of other pine species (*Pinus spp.*), fallow field, powerline corridor, clearcut and young (<10 years) pine plantations, or other. Immediately following the passive survey period, an additional 4-minute point-count (hereafter referred to as the "active survey period") was conducted while concurrently broadcasting a recorded Bachman's Sparrow vocalization. This recording consisted of short segments of a vocalizing sparrow interspersed by periods of silence to facilitate listening, and vocalizations included the traditional breeding song, aggressive chip notes, and a more excited song.

Distribution Mapping

For distribution mapping purposes, we included all available breeding season observations of Bachman's Sparrows not classified as historic (i.e., from 2007 and later; see Site Selection above), all sparrows detected during point counts, as well as all sparrows detected outside of the formal 8-min point-count period. Additionally, we included observations from concurrent investigations of Bachman's Sparrows on public lands, including parts of the Onslow Bight region (Walters 2009, Taillie et al. 2015), and portions of Holly Shelter and Sandhills Game Lands (NCWRC, unpublished data). To categorize our results according to ownership, we used the "managed areas" layer from the North Carolina Natural Heritage Program (<http://www.ncnhp>).

org/web/nhp/managed-areas), which includes properties owned by federal, state, and local governments, as well as private lands managed by conservation organizations (e.g., The Nature Conservancy) and properties associated with easements and other conservation programs, such as Safe Harbor. All points outside of the “managed areas” are privately owned and not associated with long-term conservation programs.

Detection Modeling

To investigate temporal variation in the detection of Bachman’s Sparrows, we modeled detection using only data collected during our point-count surveys in an occupancy model framework using the “Unmarked” package in R (Fiske and Chandler 2011, R Development Core Team 2014). Because we surveyed the vast majority of sites only once, we treated the entire 3-yr period as a closed “season.” We acknowledge that this method likely violates the closure assumption for single-season models, particularly for species associated with ephemeral vegetation conditions. However, given the effort required to survey such a large number of points and coordinate with hundreds of landowners, surveying all sites in one season was not possible. Nonetheless, we believe our results are informative at large spatial scales.

We treated the passive and active survey periods as 2 independent survey periods in order to estimate detection probability. Thus, we only included points that were surveyed for sparrows, and not those that were rejected due to insufficient habitat. We then added both linear and quadratic effects of date and time of survey as covariates on detection. Lastly, we included a binary categorical variable to distinguish between the active and passive survey periods.

Results

We investigated a total of 714 quarter-quads in the Sandhills and Southern Coastal Plain and 89 in the Northern Fall Line and visited 1,503 of the 1,843 (82%) total survey points. At the points we visited, we conducted point-counts at the 929 points that met our minimum suitability criteria (Fig. 2) and rejected the 574 points that did not. Of the points that were rejected for insufficient habitat, 28% had closed canopy, 59% had dense midstory, 6% had recent ground disturbance (e.g. tilling, recent fire), and 5% were converted to another land use.

Detection

According to our modeling results, a linear effect of date, a quadratic effect of time of survey, and the use of playback were significant predictors

of Bachman’s Sparrow detection ($p<0.05$; Table 1). In early to mid-April, when the majority of our surveys were conducted, the estimated probability of detecting a sparrow was close to 1 for both passive and active sampling periods. However, as the breeding season progressed, the probability of detecting a sparrow decreased in both sampling periods, though it decreased less during the active period (Fig. 3). As for time of day, we observed peak detection rates around 0800-0900 with detection decreasing towards the early and late morning; however, the window of peak detection was wider (0700-1000) during the active sampling period. Overall, an estimated detection probability of <0.2 was observed later in the season and later in the morning for passive sampling, but detection was never <0.4 for active sampling.

Distribution

Bachman’s sparrows were detected at 196 of the 929 (21%) points we surveyed, or 196 of the 1,503 (13%) of the total number of points we visited.

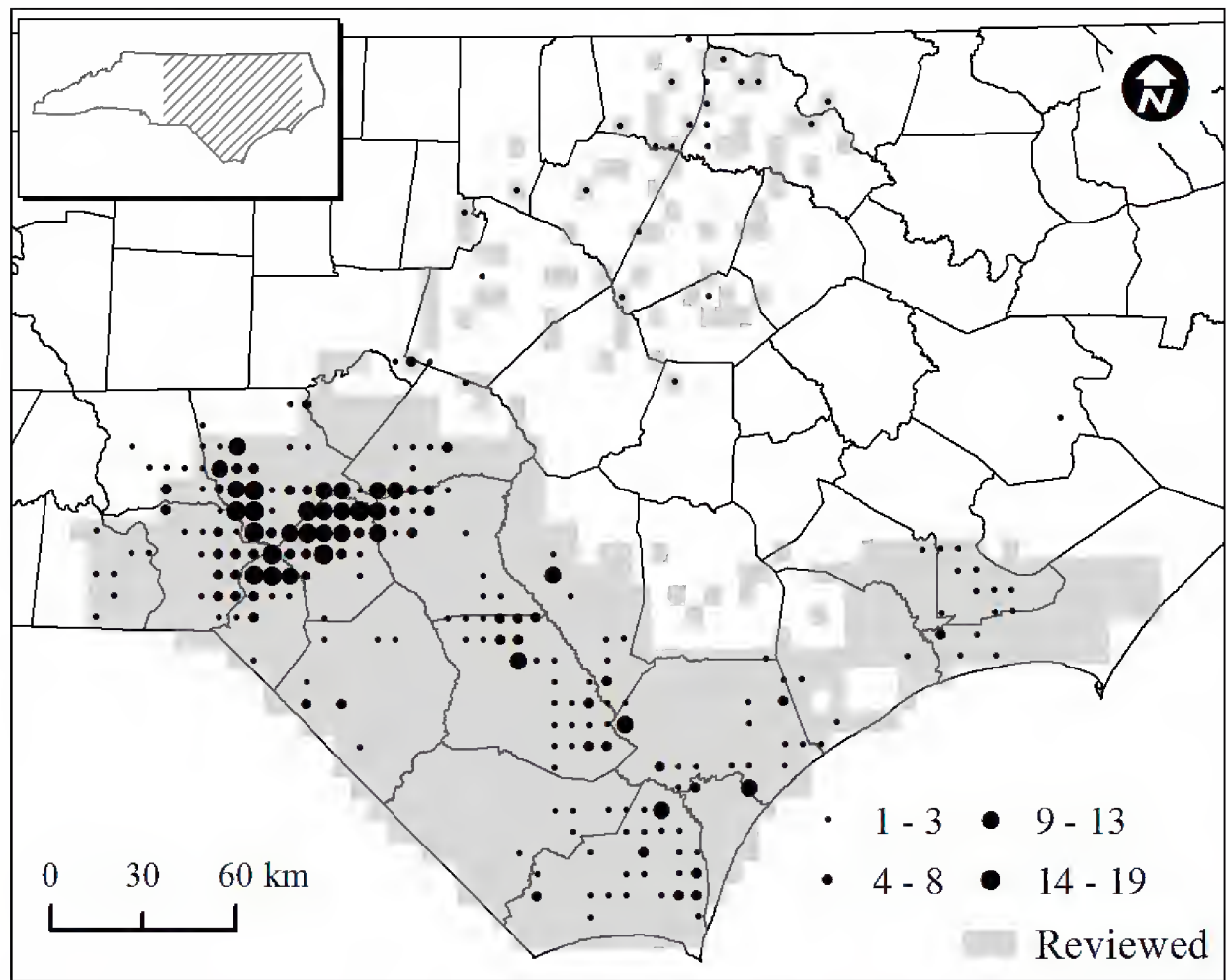


Figure 2. The shaded areas show the USGS quarter-quads for which the most recent aerial imagery was reviewed for potential habitat. If potential habitat was identified in the quarter-quad, a circle is shown in the middle of the quarter-quad to represent the number of points selected in that quarter-quad to survey for Bachman’s Sparrows.

However, this naïve occupancy rate was adjusted to an estimated occupancy of 23% after accounting for imperfect detection using our model (Table 1). Only 36 of the 196 (18%) points where sparrows were detected were on private lands. Sparrows were detected mostly on and adjacent to publicly owned properties in the Sandhills and the Southern Coastal Plain that are managed for longleaf pine (Fig. 3). These two regions are separated by the Bladen Lakes area where fewer sparrows were detected despite the presence of small to moderate-sized patches of apparently suitable habitat. No sparrows were detected in the eastern Piedmont region north of the Fort Bragg Military Installation. We detected sparrows at only 9 of the 80 sites (11%) selected based on historic records. Of the 71 historic sites where sparrows were not detected, at least 24 (34%) no longer had suitable habitat (Fig. 4). At 27 of the 71 historic points, we detected a sparrow within 3 km of the historic record, but at the remaining 44 points (55%), no sparrows were detected within the estimated dispersal distance for Bachman’s Sparrow (3 km; Cox and Jones 2007, Taillie et al. 2015).

Habitat

The great majority of the sparrows we detected were found in stands of open-canopy pine forest with evidence of recent fire on publicly owned properties.

Model	Variable Name	Variable Type	Mean	SE	P-value
Detection					
	Intercept		-0.41	0.31	0.18
	Date ^a	continuous	-0.85	0.18	<0.001
	Date ^b	continuous	0.16	0.17	0.33
	Time ^b	continuous	0.03	0.16	0.86
	Time ²	continuous	-0.34	0.15	0.02
Occupancy	Type ^c	categorical	1.84	0.31	<0.001
	Intercept		-1.18	.124	<0.001

Table 1. Parameter estimates (on logit scale), standard errors, and p-values for covariates included in our occupancy model.

^aDate of survey

^bTime of day

^cIndicator variable for passive vs. active survey (passive is reference level)

Of the 293 Bachman’s Sparrow observations, 278 (95%) were in mature longleaf pine woodland, 12 (4%) were found in open canopy stands of other pine species, one was detected on the edge between a clearcut and a mature longleaf stand, and two were in recently burned, young pine plantations. No sparrows were observed in fallow agricultural fields or utility rights-of-way.

At 88% of the sites we surveyed where at least one Bachman’s Sparrow was detected, we observed evidence that the site was recently burned, i.e. trees were scorched, shrubs were dead, or wiregrass was flowering. The exceptions included sparrows detected in recently thinned pine woodlands, including “residential thinnings” conducted in woodlands in preparation for new home construction. An additional 11 points with sparrows had evidence of fire but it was not considered to be recent (i.e. in the last 4 years or less). Finally, over 80% of the sites where sparrows were detected were found on properties identified by the NCNHP as managed for some degree of conservation of biodiversity and ecosystem function.

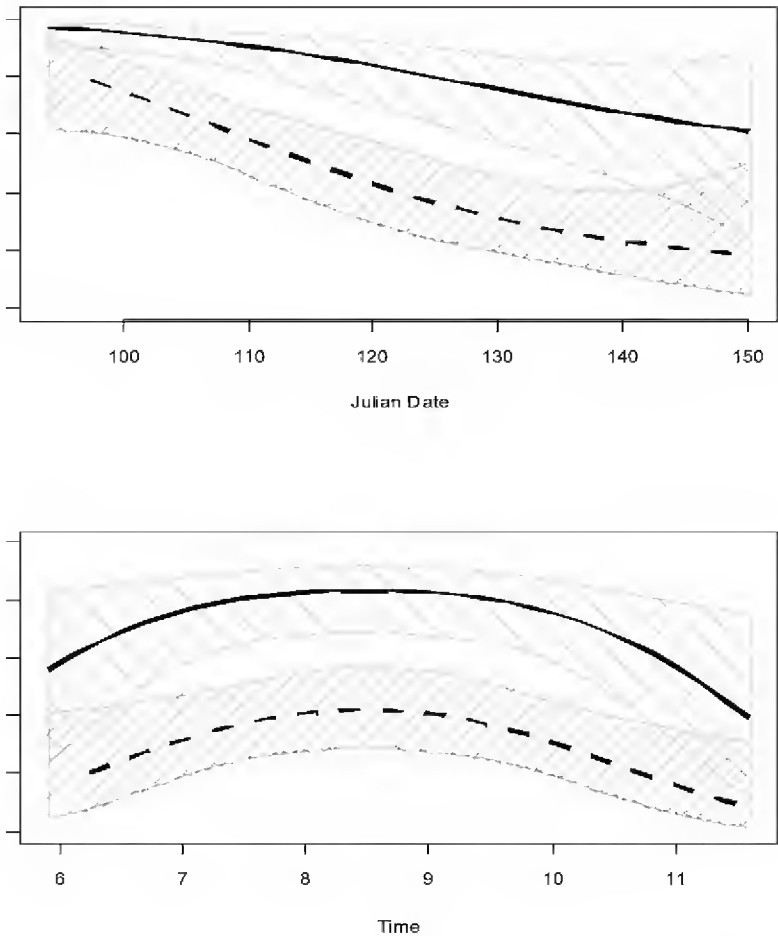


Figure 3. The predicted probability of detecting Bachman’s Sparrow in North Carolina (2012-2014), shown as a function of date (a) and time of day (b), both before (dashed line) and after playback (solid line), with associated 95% CI (shaded regions)

Discussion

Bachman’s Sparrows have a much narrower distribution than that suggested by the NCGAP predicted distribution, and more closely reflects the general pattern of many sensitive species associated with the longleaf pine community (Humphries and Sisson 2012, Beane et al. 2014). The Sandhills region contains the most contiguous habitat, specifically the frequently burned, open-canopy longleaf forests of Fort Bragg and Sandhills Game Land, and virtually all suitable habitat on and adjacent to these public properties was found to support sparrows. In addition, sparrows were found throughout the Southern Coastal Plain but were primarily concentrated on or near large, frequently burned properties such as Croatan National Forest, Marine Corps Base Camp Lejeune, Holly Shelter Game Land, and the Green Swamp Preserve. In these “core areas” continued efforts to maintain fire return intervals <4 yr, promote herbaceous ground cover, and restore fire-suppressed forests will help to maintain and expand extant Bachman’s Sparrow populations. Similarly, more widespread use of prescribed fire as a forest management tool on

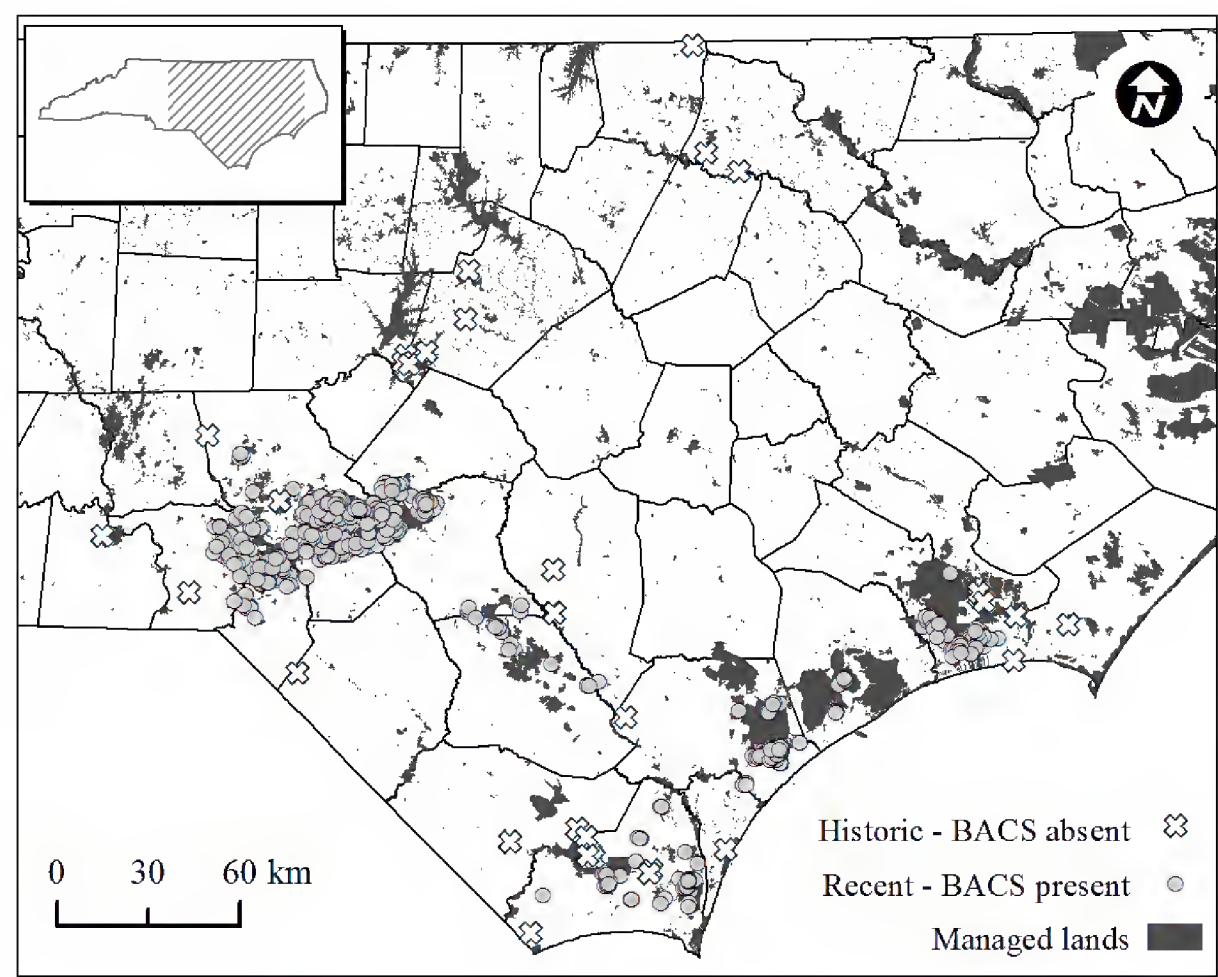


Figure 4. The distribution of recent Bachman’s Sparrow observations from this study, Walters et al. (2009) and Taillie et al. (2015) as well as historical observations (prior to 2007) where sparrows were not found to persist.

adjacent private lands would likely benefit Bachman's Sparrow populations. Unfortunately, the logistics associated with burning continue to limit the extent of prescribed burning on private lands, despite various incentive programs that promote longleaf pine restoration (Alavalapti et al. 2002, Moorman et al. 2004).

Unlike in other parts of their range further south, use of secondary habitats such as clearcuts, fallow fields, and powerline rights-of-way is North Carolina. At this northeastern edge of their current range, Bachman's Sparrow productivity and survival may be more limited than at the core of their range farther south. North Carolina populations may therefore be at or below carrying capacity and without a surplus of individuals who are forced into less ideal, secondary habitats. Alternatively, timber management practices, such as site preparation, herbicide use, or tree spacing in NC may be affecting vegetation conditions in clearcuts and re-growing pine plantations. A more thorough quantification of regional differences in the vegetation conditions of clearcuts and re-growing pine plantations and their relationship to Bachman's Sparrow habitat use is needed in order to determine the mechanism behind this pattern. Though many of the recent clearcuts and fallow fields we surveyed had substantial herbaceous cover, both plant and bird species composition in these secondary habitats were different from the fire-maintained longleaf pine stands where Bachman's Sparrows were found, possibly resulting from management practices that disturb the soil such as disking and roller-chopping (Rutledge and Conner 2002). Finally, the duration of suitability of clearcuts and young pine plantations may be too short to support long-term persistence of sparrows (Watts et al. 1998). Given the extensive area of industrial timber operations across the study area, clearcuts and young pine plantations have tremendous potential to support populations of sparrows, if they are regularly thinned and managed with fire to promote abundant and diverse herbaceous vegetation (Tucker et al. 2004, Stober and Krementz 2006). Consideration of the mechanisms behind why these secondary habitats go unused is requisite to developing state-specific management goals for this species, and ultimately mitigating their decline.

The scarcity of sparrows outside the "core areas," despite the availability of apparently suitable habitat, suggests additional factors may be contributing to the decline of Bachman's Sparrows. For example, Bladen Lakes State Forest and surrounding areas supported fewer sparrows than expected, perhaps because the habitat patches in this area appear to be smaller, fragmented, and more isolated from each other relative to the "core areas." In addition to the historical sites we visited, a more recent study of Bachman's Sparrows using repeated visits confirmed our finding that few sparrows persist in the Bladen Lakes area (J. M. Winiarski, pers. comm.). Taillie et al. (2015) observed that the probability of sparrow occupancy decreased markedly when the amount of potential habitat within 3 km was less than ~500 ha. Thus, the landscape scale

distribution of habitat is likely a contributing factor to the observed patterns in habitat use.

In order to identify the mechanisms driving the observed patterns of habitat use by Bachman's Sparrows, future monitoring efforts should focus on investigating the temporal dynamics of sparrow populations in these occasionally-used, isolated sites. Ideally, these survey efforts would track individuals and occur over several consecutive years. However, for less intensive surveys, i.e. those not accounting for variable detection probability, focusing effort in the early breeding season (April – May), during the early to mid-morning, and incorporating the use of playback without a passive listening period will help to maximize detection of sparrows.

The private landowners involved with this study whose property supported Bachman's Sparrows had varying land management objectives, but many had an interest in managing their land for Northern Bobwhite (*Colinus virginianus*). As such, partnering with quail restoration efforts could be an effective strategy to promote Bachman's Sparrow habitat on private lands. Many of the private properties supporting Bachman's Sparrows in the Sandhills region are enrolled in the Safe Harbor program for Red-cockaded Woodpecker, suggesting that this program provides benefits for multiples species associated with longleaf pine. Future longleaf pine restoration efforts on private lands will need to find ways to incorporate prescribed fire while considering the management objectives and financial concerns of private landowners and industrial timber operations if functioning longleaf pine ecosystems are to be conserved outside of public lands.

Acknowledgments

This study would not have been possible without volunteers, field technicians, and individuals who helped secure permission to access survey points and collect data, including B. Beck, R. Bollinger, K. Brust, G. Coll, K. Cook, R. Elting, L. Fogo, J. Goodson, E. Gruber, N. Handle, K. Johnson, A. Lawrence, B. Massa, S. Miller, M. Nicossia, J. Schillaci, M. Sisson, N. Shepherd, B. Strobe, and M. Wallgren. In addition, we would like to thank The Nature Conservancy, Fort Bragg Military Installation, and the many private landowners that granted us permission to conduct surveys on their land, A. Fish and J. Winiarski from North Carolina State University for providing supplementary observation data of Bachman's Sparrows, and J. A. Cox and D. B. McNair for providing additional expertise and historical context. Finally, we thank D. B. McNair for several reviews of the manuscript. This study was initiated and coordinated by the NC Wildlife Resources Commission and funding was provided by State Wildlife Grants, Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration, and the North Carolina Non-Game and Endangered Species fund.

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BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Winter 2015-2016, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

Winter	December 1 - February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1 - May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1 - July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1 - November 30	due December 20

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Reports published herein may include sightings that require review by the state bird record's committee. Such reports are not considered accepted records until, and unless, they are so ruled by the committee.

Abbreviations: **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **CBC** – Christmas Bird Count, **Co** – County, **Dr** – Drive, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NF** – National Forest, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

Greater White-fronted Goose: 18 in the Mulberry Fields along the Yadkin River Greenway in North Wilkesboro, Wilkes Co, NC, 16 Feb (Issac Kerns) through the end of the period (m. obs) was a great count. Up to two were seen in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 11 Dec (Steve McInnis) through 7 Feb (Irvin Pitts). Individuals were seen at South Cove County Park, Oconee Co, SC, 4 Dec through 5 Feb (Stephen Schutt, m. obs.); at Lake Hills, Forsyth Co, NC, 6-7 Dec (Cynthia Donaldson, m. obs.); at Buffalo Lake, Guilford Co, NC, 5 Jan (Lou Skrabec); at the Simpson Experiment Station, Anderson Co, SC, 23 Jan (Linda Montgomery); on the campus of Charleston Southern University, Charleston Co, SC, 23 Jan through 11 Feb (Pam Ford, m. obs.); at Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 3-4 Feb (Jan Hansen, m. obs.); and at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 6 Feb (Allen Hurlbert, et al.).

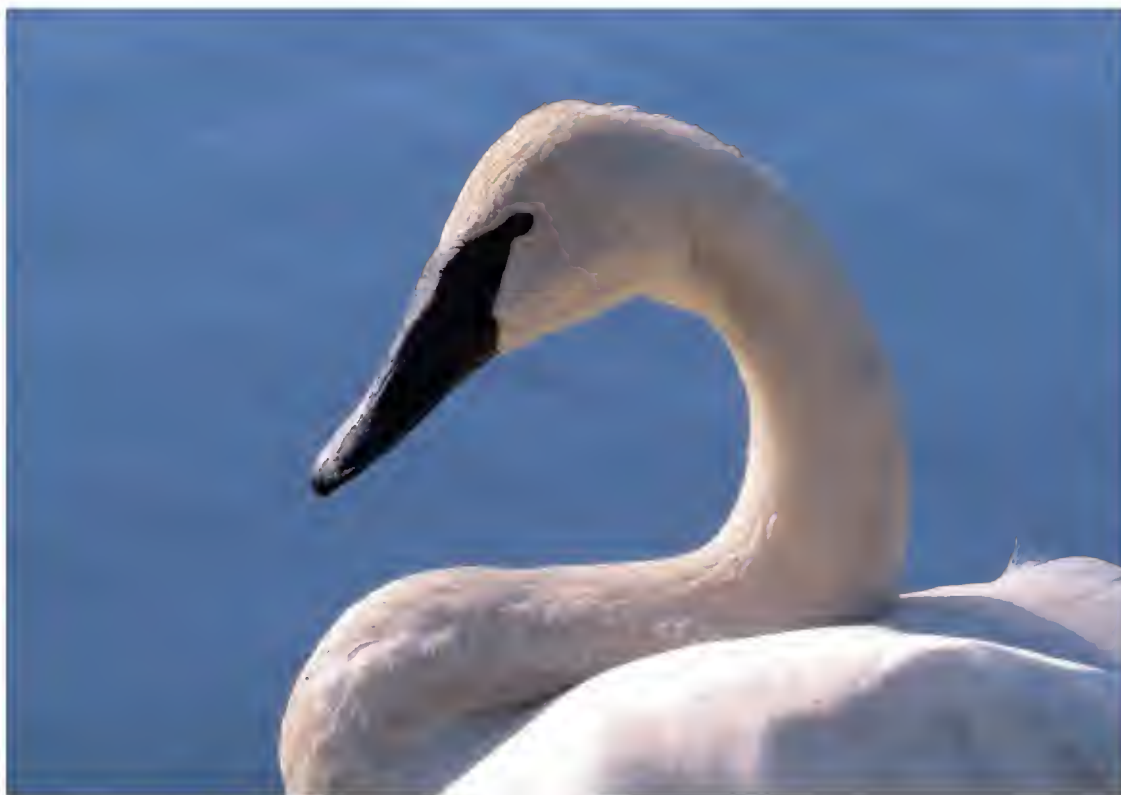
Snow Goose: Sightings of Snow Geese in the western half of our region have increased in recent years. This winter, those sightings included one on Osceola Lake, Henderson Co, NC, 5 Dec (Jennifer Donsky) intermittently through 23 Feb (Aaron Steed); one on Rankin Lake, Gaston Co, NC, 8-10 Dec (John Woodward, m. obs.); two at Silver Creek Plantation, Burke Co, NC, 10-16 Dec (Joy Lanier, m. obs.); one in Devotion, Surry Co, NC, 13 Dec (*fide* Royce Hough); four along Foster Estate Dr in Buncombe Co, NC, 20 Dec (Doug Johnston); one around Charles D. Owen Park in Buncombe Co, NC, 29 Dec through 3 Jan (Jay Wherley, m. obs.); two in Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 1 Jan (Jerry Griggs); one at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 8 Jan (Tom Austin); one amongst Canada Geese along Hanes Mill Rd in Forsyth Co, NC, 19-25 Jan (Rob Rogers, m. obs.); one at Swann WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 24 Jan (John Haire, et al.) and 20 Feb (Shelley Rutkin); two along the Yadkin River Greenway in Wilkes Co, NC, 3-16 Feb (Issac Kerns, m. obs.); one at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 13 Feb (Drew Lanham); one in Eden, Rockingham Co, NC, 20-28 Feb (Marty Wall); and one photographed along Beech Mountain Rd in Avery Co, NC, 20 Feb (Chloe Burdick). Also noteworthy was the flock of up to 48 were seen in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, December through mid-February (m. obs.).

Ross's Goose: Sightings of this small goose continue to increase in our region. This winter, sightings included five on a pond in eastern Alexander Co, NC, 6 Dec (Dwayne Martin); one around the campus of Guilford College, Guilford Co, NC, 10-12 Dec (Ron Morris, m. obs.); one on Stroud Lake, Transylvania Co, NC, 11 Dec (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); one at The Coves Golf Club in Caldwell Co, NC, 11 Dec (Walt Kent, Martin); one in Elkin, Surry Co, NC, 13 Dec (Brian Ratledge) and 14 Dec (Derek Hudgins); one at the pond where US-64 crosses Beasley Rd in Washington Co, NC, 27-28 Dec (Jeff Beane, Ryan Justice, m. obs.); one in the area around Charles D. Owen Park, Buncombe Co, NC, 29 Dec (Jay Wherley) through 3 Jan (Clifton Avery); four at the eastern end of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 29 Dec (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand); on at Swann WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, 30

Dec (Teresa Edwards); two at the pond on Beasley Rd, 30 Dec through 2 Jan (m. obs.); six in the Pungo Unit of Pocosin Lakes NWR, border of Hyde Co and Washington Co, NC, 30 Dec (Lucas Bobay); one around Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 1 Jan (Jerry Griggs) though 8 Feb (William Byler); one on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 21 Jan (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, Bob Olthoff) through 25 Jan (Kirk Gardner); one on Crowfield Plantation Lake, Berkley Co, SC, 24 Jan (Kristen Oliver) through 30 Jan (Caroline Eastman); one on Rankin Lake, Gaston Co, NC, 11 Feb (Lee Weber) through 15 Feb (Steve Tracy); one on Bridge Pond, Georgetown Co, SC, 12 Feb (Bill Clary); one near Green Pond, Colleton Co, SC, 8 Feb (Darryl Wilcox) through 18 Feb (Cherrie Sneed); two at the Simpson Research Station, Anderson Co, SC, 14 Feb (Linda Montgomery); two between Kure Beach and Fort Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 14-15 Feb (Bruce Smithson, m. obs.); two on Ecusta Pond, Transylvania Co, NC, 20-21 Feb (Griggs); one along River Ridge Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 28-29 Feb (Matt Wangerin, m. obs.); and one at the Biltmore Estate, Buncombe Co, NC, 28-29 Feb (Denise Hargrove, m. obs.).

Brant: One in Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 17 Dec (*fide* Lex Glover) was a great find for that area. Four at the northern end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 20 Feb (Andrew Thornton) were somewhat unusual. 565 on the Pamlico Sound near Hatteras Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 27 Dec (Ned Brinkley) was our region's high count.

Cackling Goose: Up to five were seen around Wilkesboro, Wilkes Co, NC, during the latter half of the period—one in the Woodfield neighborhood, 9



Trumpeter Swan, 02 Jan 2016, Hyde Co, NC. Photo by Jeff Beane.

Jan (Dwayne Martin); three along the Yadkin River Greenway, 16 Feb (Issac Kerns); and five at Wilkes Community College and other nearby sites, 17 Feb (Martin, Guy McGrane) through 22 Feb (m. obs.). Other sightings, all made in NC, included one at Lake Hills, Forsyth Co, 7 Dec (David & Susan Disher, Cynthia Donaldson, John Haire, Derek Hudgins); one at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, 13 Dec (Lynn Erla Beegle, Harry LeGrand, Jan Mouro); one near the pond where US-64 crosses Beasley Rd in Washington Co, 28 Dec (Derb Carter, LeGrand, m. obs.); and four at the same site, 19 Feb (Lucas Bobay, Ed Corey, et al.).

Trumpeter Swan: Two were seen at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 20 Dec (Karen Lebing, Keith Ramos) into early January (m. obs.), with one remaining until 9 Jan (Mandy & Phil Cumming).

Tundra Swan: Farther inland than typical for the species was one along Howerton Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 6-18 Jan (Lou Skrabec, m. obs.); one at Beaver Lake, Buncombe Co, NC, 12 Jan (Simon Thompson, et al.) through 18 Feb (Diane Lombardi); seven in the Sullivan Impoundment at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 19-20 Jan (Will Stuart); three at Lake Wheeler, Wake Co, NC, 8 Feb (Lucas Bobay, m. obs.); three at Pee Dee NWR, 20 Feb (Cara & Tony Woods, et al.); and five on Lake Hickory, Catawba Co, NC, 29 Feb (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby). Tundra Swans were found in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 19 Dec (Jessica Porter) through 4 Feb (Diane Lombardi), with a high count of 16 there 29 Jan (Kevin DeBoer). 134 at Bear Island NWR, Colleton Co, SC, 17 Feb (David McLean, David Youngblood) was an impressive count for the southern portion of our coast. 38798 on the Pettigrew SP CBC, 30 Dec (*fide* Charlotte Davis) was, by far, the highest count on any Audubon CBC this year.

Eurasian Wigeon: Individual drakes were seen on South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 4 Dec (Jeff Pippen) through 12 Dec (Harry LeGrand); at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 17 Dec (Lewis Burke, et al.); at Tibwin Plantation, Charleston Co, SC, during the McClellanville CBC, 20 Dec (Craig Watson, et al.); at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 29 Dec (Mike McCloy) through 28 Feb (David Howell); on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 30 Jan through 12 Feb (David McLean, et al.); and at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 1 Feb (Ron Clark).

Northern Pintail: Eight at the WTP along NC-191 in Henderson Co, NC, 2 Dec (Wayne Forsythe) was a good count for the mountains.

Redhead: 18000 at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, during the Bodie-Pea Island CBC, 28 Dec (Jeff Lewis) was a remarkable count and the fourth highest on any Audubon CBC this year. Some of the higher counts from the western portion of our region were 62 along Stamey Valley Rd in Greenville Co, SC, 14 Feb (Simon Harvey); 68 on Lake Hartwell off Clemson, Pickens Co, SC, 19 Feb (Kevin Kubach); 30 on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 22

Feb (Kirk Gardner); and 35 at the WTP along NC-191 in Henderson Co, NC, 29 Feb (Marilyn Westphal).

Ring-necked Duck: 5,500 at Singletary Lake SP, Bladen Co, NC, 27 Dec (Sam Cooper) was a noteworthy count.

Greater Scaup: 75 on Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 27 Feb (Harry LeGrand) was a remarkable number for the Piedmont region.

Common Eider: Individuals were seen off Jennette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, a hen, 19 Dec (Jamie Adams) through 27 Dec (m. obs.); off Carolina Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, a hen, 19 Dec (Sam Cooper); and at Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, a first-year drake, 27 Feb (Stefan Martin) into March (m. obs.).

Black Scoter: Individual hens photographed on Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 3 Dec (Henry Link, m. obs.) and Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 4 Dec (Mark Anthony) were good finds for those inland lakes.

Long-tailed Duck: Inland sightings included a first-winter hen photographed on Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 20 Dec (Brian Bockhahn, Kyle Kittelberger, Paul Scharf); two, a drake and a hen, in the Ledge Creek arm of Falls Lake, Wake Co, NC, 4 Jan (Brian Bockhahn); and a hen on Lake Hickory, Caldwell Co, NC, 13 Jan (Dwayne Martin). An adult hen seen and photographed off Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 27 Jan (Juliana Smith) through 16 Feb (m. obs.) was the southern-most sighting made in our region.

Common Goldeneye: Sightings included a hen on South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 28 Dec through 8 Jan (m. obs.); a drake on Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 3-19 Jan (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey, m. obs.); a hen on Mullet Pond at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 17 Jan (Ron Morris) through 17 Feb (m. obs.); a hen on Ray's Mill Pond, Moore Co, NC, 30 Jan into March (Alicia Jackson); a hen at the WTP along NC-191 in Henderson Co, NC, 1-9 Feb (Forsythe); two hens at Riverbend Park, Catawba Co, NC, 2-18 Feb (Dwayne Martin, m. obs.); a drake on the north campus of Wake Tech, Wake Co, NC, 3-13 Feb (Lucas Bobay, Mailiis Law, m. obs.); two hens along Woodfield Way in Wilkes Co, NC, 6-26 Feb (Issac Kerns, m. obs.); a hen on Grogan Lake, Rockingham Co, NC, 14 Feb (Marty Wall); and a hen at Patriot's Point, Charleston Co, SC, 16-28 Feb (Carl Miller, m. obs.).

Common Merganser: As usual, our region's high count was made at Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, with 300 on 7 Jan (Audrey Whitlock). Locally unusual were individuals on South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, a hen, 4 Dec (Lucas Bobay, et al.) through 7 Jan (Peggy Eubank); on the south end of Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, SC, a hen, 11 Jan (Mayn Hipp) into March (m. obs.); and at Swann WTP, Forsyth Co, NC, a drake, 23 Feb (John Haire, et al.).

Red-breasted Merganser: A few of the higher counts made on inland lakes were 28 on Lake Hickory in Alexander Co, NC, 1 Dec (Dwayne Martin, Lori Owenby); 17 on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 2 Dec (Mike Stewart, et

al.); 15 at Arcadia Farms in Orangeburg Co, SC, 8 Dec (Julie Mobley); and 20 on Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 23 Dec (Kirk Gardner).

Ruddy Duck: 1000 at the Goldsboro WTP, Wayne Co, NC, 21 Jan (Sam Cooper) was a noteworthy count.

Red-throated Loon: 3751 in Dare Co, NC, during the Kitty Hawk CBC, 19 Dec (*fide* Jeff Lewis) was the second highest count on any Audubon CBC this year. An individual on Monticello Reservoir in Fairfield Co, SC, 23 Dec (Bob Wood, et al.) was the only one found on an inland lake in the Carolinas this winter.

Pacific Loon: Three amongst Common Loons off Figure Eight Island, New Hanover Co, NC, 12 Dec (Derb Carter) was a nice concentration. Also in New Hanover Co were individuals off Oceanic Pier, 2 Jan (Carter, Ricky Davis, Harry LeGrand, Jeff Pippen) and Johnnie Mercer's Pier, 2 Jan (Jan Hansen) through 15 Jan (David Weesner). One was well-photographed off the rock groin at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 31 Dec (Alan MacEachren, Jeff Lewis).

Horned Grebe: A few of the higher counts at sites away from the coast were 25 on Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 1 Dec (Wayne Forsythe); 62 on Lake Hartwell, Pickens Co, SC, 10 Dec (Kevin Kubach); 100 on Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 20 Dec (Kyle Kittelberger); 150 on Monticello Reservoir, Fairfield Co, SC, 23 Dec (Bob Wood, et al.); and 47 on Oak Hollow Lake, Guilford Co, NC, 27 Jan (Andrew Thornton).

Red-necked Grebe: Sightings, down from the past couple of winters, included one on Falls Lake in Durham Co, NC, 3 Dec (Kyle Kittelberger) through 9 Dec (Harry LeGrand); two in flight off Jennette's Pier, Dare Co, NC,



Common Merganser, 16 Jan 2016, Pawley's Island, SC. Photo by Pam Ford.

4 Dec (Jeff Pippen); one on Lake Benson, Wake Co, NC, during the Raleigh CBC, 19 Dec (Brian Bockhahn, Kittelberger); one on the Harbor River in Beaufort Co, SC, 12 Feb (Chris Marsh, et al.); and one at Diamond Shoals off Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, during a pelagic trip, 14 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Eared Grebe: Individuals were seen on South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 4 Dec (Jeff Pippen) through 6 Dec (Ricky Davis) and on the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 24 Dec (Frederic Hareau).

Western Grebe: Sightings, all made in SC, included one off Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, 30 Dec (Wendy Allen) though 3 Jan (m. obs.); one off Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, 3 Jan (Starr Hazard, William Christenson, David McLean, et al.); two at Botany Bay Plantation WMA, Charleston Co, 27 Jan (David Youngblood); and one continuing at Botany Bay Plantation WMA, 30 Jan (Andy Harrison) through 1 Feb (m. obs.).

Northern Fulmar: This cold-water tubenose was found on all four pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, this winter, with 66 on 6 Feb; eight on 14 Feb; 32 on 20 Feb; and four on 27 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Black-capped Petrel: One seen near Diamond Shoals during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 6 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.) was unusual away from the warmer waters of the Gulf Stream.

Sooty Shearwater: One seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co,



Western Grebe, 27 Jan 2016, Botany Bay Plantation WMA, SC.
Photo by David Youngblood.

NC, 6 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.) was unusual for the winter season.

Manx Shearwater: This species was found on three of the four pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, this winter, with two on 6 Feb, and individuals 20 Feb and 27 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Wood Stork: One seen along River North Dr in Aiken Co, SC, 13-21 Feb (Bill Grigsby, Eric Haskell, m. obs.) was unusual for a site away from the coast in winter. 136 in Beaufort Co, SC, during the Lowcountry CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* Buddy Campbell) was a record number for that count.

Great Cormorant: Sightings included up to six at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, from late December into March (m. obs.); one off Folly Beach, Charleston Co, SC, 19 Jan (Chris Snook); at least one at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, in early February (m. obs.); three on the jetty at Cape Lookout, Carteret Co, NC, 27 Feb (Keith Rittmaster, Josh Summers); and two at Hatteras Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 27 Feb (Ned Brinkley).

Anhinga: Sightings away from the coast included up to eight at Brick Pond Park, Aiken Co, SC, throughout the period (Kathy Steele); 18 in Clarendon Co, SC, during the Santee NWR CBC, 22 Dec (*fide* Irvin Pitts); and three in Pitt Co, NC, during the Greenville CBC, 2 Jan (*fide* Veronica Pantelidis).

American White Pelican: 250 at the St Stephen dam in Berkeley Co, SC, 24 Feb (Kevin Kubach) was our region's high count. High counts at traditional wintering sites along the coast included 125 at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 28 Dec (Phi Doerr, et al.); 77 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 31 Dec (Steve Calver); 58 at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 29 Jan (Irvin Pitts); 83 at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 31 Jan (Buddy Campbell); 200 at Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 6 Feb (Matthew Janson, Martina Nordstrand); and 155 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 15 Feb (Chris Marsh). Locally unusual were 30 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Dec (John Fussell); 25 at the catfish ponds along US-64 in Creswell, Washington Co, NC, 1 Feb (Matthew King); 23 at Glenburnie Quarry (restricted access) Craven Co, NC, 2 Feb (Al Gamache); seven at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 20 Feb (*fide* Bob Rybczynski); and four on Lake Benson, Wake Co, NC, where photographed, 28 Feb (Brenda Jones) through 4 Mar (Alicia Jackson).

American Bittern: One, presumably the same individual seen in past years, wintered at Prairie Ridge Ecostation, Wake Co, NC, for a third straight year, seen 18 Dec through 20 Feb (Brian O'Shea, m. obs.).

Least Bittern: Individuals photographed at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 20 Jan (Jon Smith) and 14 Feb (Keith Ramos) were unusual for the winter season.

Little Blue Heron: A juvenile Little Blue Heron seen and photographed in southern Wake Co, NC, 13-14 Feb (John Cox) was unusual so far inland during the winter.

Reddish Egret: Rare winter sightings were made of individuals in Pawleys



American Bittern, 18 Dec 2015, Wake Co, NC. Photo by Jeff Beane.

Island, Georgetown Co, SC, 11 Dec (Mayn Hipp); on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 31 Dec (William Christenson, David McLean); and at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 31 Dec (Steve Calver).

Cattle Egret: 58 in Fairfield, Hyde Co, NC, 1 Jan (Steve Howell) was a noteworthy count for the winter period.

Green Heron: Individuals found along the Haw River in Saxapahaw, Alamance Co, NC, 20 Dec (Bradley Saul) and along Windygap Rd in Mecklenburg Co, NC, during the Charlotte CBC, 26 Dec (Alan Kneidel, Ken Kneidel) were great finds for those sites outside of the coastal plain during the winter. The high count along the SC coast was seven in Beaufort Co, during the Hilton Head Island CBC, 14 Dec (*fide* Susan Murphy).

Roseate Spoonbill: The highest totals from CBCs along the SC coast were eight at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 17 Dec (Matt Johnson); 48 at the Savannah River Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, during the Savannah CBC, 2 Jan (Lewis Burke, Lauren Morgens, Matthew Sarver, Roger Smith); and nine in Charleston Co, during the Sea Islands CBC, 4 Jan (*fide* Aaron Given).

Bald Eagle: Locally unusual was a nest-site in the Newport River estuary



Swainson's Hawk, 03 Jan 2016, Dare Co, NC. Photo by Jeff Beane.

in Carteret Co, NC, in December (John Fussell).

Swainson's Hawk: An immature light-morph individual was seen and photographed at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 27 Dec (David Howell) through 9 Jan (Elisa Flanders).

Golden Eagle: This winter's sightings included an immature bird at Congaree National Park, Richland Co, SC, during its CBC, 20 Dec (John Grego); a second-year bird photographed over NC-113 in Alleghany Co, NC, 16 Jan (Eric Harrold, et al.); an adult photographed at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 1 Feb (David & Susan Disher); an adult just north of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, 6 Feb (Derb Carter); and an adult at the Savannah River Site (restricted access), Barnwell Co, SC, 14 Feb (Mark Vukovich).

Black Rail: John Fussell notes that he used audio playback to find Black Rails in the upper North River Marshes in Carteret Co, NC, on two occasions in December, without success. This species was regular in winter at that site until about the turn of the century.

King Rail: Nine at the Air Force bombing range (restricted access) adjacent to Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, during its CBC, 30 Dec (John Fussell) was a record number for that count. Fussell believes the high count was "almost certainly related to the mild weather this winter."

Common Gallinule: North of the species' typical winter range was one on a small pond in Waves, Dare Co, NC, throughout the period (m. obs.); one at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 13 Dec (Harry LeGrand, et al.) through 21 Feb (Brad Wood); nine in Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* John Fussell); one on Lilliput Pond in New Bern, Craven Co, 6 Feb (Al Gamache); and two on the freshwater pond along the Buxton Woods Nature Trail, Dare Co, NC, 19 Feb (Keith Camburn). One that responded to audio playback at the WTP in St Matthews, Calhoun Co, SC, during the Congaree Swamp CBC, 20 Dec (Dennis Forsythe) was a first for that count.

Sandhill Crane: Good numbers of Sandhill Cranes were present in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, throughout the winter, with a high count of 52 made 27 Jan (Jay Chandler). Elsewhere, sightings included three near where US-64 crosses Beasley Rd in Washington Co, NC, 5 Dec (Karen Hogan, Jesse Pope, Steve Shultz); five at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 2 Jan (Steve Holzman); two around the airport in Beaufort, Carteret Co, NC, for yet another winter, 14 Jan (Paula Gillikin) through 1 Mar (Greg Massey); a juvenile crane at two nearby sites north of Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, 25 Jan through 14 Feb (Cynthia Donaldson, m. obs.); five along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 26 Jan (Wayne Forsythe); one in northern Edgecombe Co, NC, 14 Feb (Ricky Davis); seven photographed in a field along Brices Store Rd in Duplin Co, NC, 19 Feb (John Carpenter); 13 in a field along NC-481 west of Enfield, Halifax Co, NC, 19 Feb (Steve Howell); and two in flight over Riverbend Park, Catawba Co, NC, 27 Feb (Dwayne Martin).

Black-necked Stilt: One photographed at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 31 Dec (Steve Calver) was a great find for our region in winter.

American Avocet: A few of the higher counts were 342 in Dare Co, NC, during the Bodie-Pea Island CBC, 28 Dec (*fide* Steve Holzman); 329 at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 2 Jan (Dennis Forsythe, Irvin Pitts); 120 at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 5-6 Feb (m. obs.); and 368 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 21 Feb (Christopher Perry).

American Oystercatcher: 1042 along the Intercoastal Waterway near Awendaw, Charleston Co, SC, 26 Jan (Mary-Catherine Martin) was a remarkable count.

Black-bellied Plover: Birders visiting at Ophelia Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, in search of the Mountain Plover observed up to 600 Black-bellied Plovers there in late January into February (Sherry Lane, Jeff Lewis, m. obs.).

Wilson's Plover: A few of the better winter counts along the southern SC coast were six on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, 4 Jan and 1 Feb (Aaron Given); six on Deveau Bank, Charleston Co, 4-13 Jan (Janet Thibault); and six on Harbor Island, Beaufort Co, 26 Feb (Buddy Campbell, et al.). Two at

the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 26 Dec (Stan Rule) were the only ones noted in NC during the winter.

Piping Plover: Some of the higher counts were 27 in Beaufort Co, SC, during the Lowcountry CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* Buddy Campbell); 12 around Beaufort Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* John Fussell); 24 in Charleston Co, SC, during the Sea Islands CBC, 4 Jan (*fide* Aaron Given); and 15 at Ophelia Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, 2 Feb (Sam Cooper, et al.) and 13 Feb (Nathan Goldberg, et al.).

Mountain Plover: One of the more exciting finds during the winter was that of a Mountain Plover on the Core Banks at the south side of Ophelia Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, 29 Jan (Robert Gilson). Many birders visited the site to see this rare vagrant until it was last seen 27 Feb (m. obs.). If accepted by the NC BRC, this sighting will provide NC with its first record of this species from the western United States.

Spotted Sandpiper: Sightings made away from the coast included one at Lake Surf (restricted access), Moore Co, NC, during the Southern Pines CBC, 20 Dec (David Williamson); two at McAlpine WTP, Mecklenburg Co, NC, during the Charlotte CBC, 26 Dec (Matthew Janson, et al.); one in Chatham Co, NC, during the Jordan Lake CBC, 3 Jan (Patrick Coin, Peggy Maslow); and one at Dobbins Farm in Townville, Anderson Co, SC, 30 Jan (Kent Bedenbaugh) through 6 Feb (Michael Robertson). Our region's winter high count was 15 in Beaufort Co, SC, during the Lowcountry CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* Buddy Campbell).

Solitary Sandpiper: One seen near Sewee Bay, Charleston Co, SC, during the Charleston CBC, 3 Jan (Ed Blitch, et al.) was a great find for winter.

Greater Yellowlegs: One found at Mountain Island Lake in Gaston Co, NC, during the Southern Lake Norman CBC, 20 Dec (Steve Tracey, Judy Walker) was unusual for a site so far from the coast during the winter.

Lesser Yellowlegs: 150 along River Rd at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 30 Dec (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand) was a large number for winter.

Whimbrel: Winter sightings included one at multiple sites at Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, throughout the period (m. obs.); two where US-70 crosses the North River in Carteret Co, NC, 19 Dec (Chandra Biggerstaff); four in Beaufort Co, SC, during the Lowcountry CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* Buddy Campbell); and two photographed at Edisto Beach SP, Colleton Co, SC, 7 Jan (Doris Ratchford).

Long-billed Curlew: One continued from the fall season near the campground at Edisto Beach SP, Colleton Co, SC, where photographed, 7 Jan (Doris Ratchford). Up to two were seen at Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, throughout the winter (m. obs.). Birders visiting Ophelia Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, in search of the Mountain Plover, also saw a Long-billed Curlew there, 28 Jan (Derb Carter, et al.) through 21 Feb (m. obs.).

Marbled Godwit: A few of the higher counts this winter were 300 in



Long-billed Curlew, 06 Dec 2015, Cape Romain NWR, SC.
Photo by Phil Fowler.

Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* John Fussell); 113 in Beaufort Co, SC, during the Lowcountry CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* Buddy Campbell); and 364 on Marsh Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 25 Jan (Mary-Catherine Martin).

Ruff: An immature female found in a flooded field along River Rd at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 11 Dec (Harry LeGrand, et al.) was seen and photographed by many through 1 Jan (Mike Stewart).

Stilt Sandpiper: 46 were counted at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 2 Jan (*fide* Steve Calver). Up to four were seen at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 15-19 Feb (Chris Marsh, m. obs.).

Purple Sandpiper: NC's and SC's respective high counts were 56 at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, 24 Dec (Sam Cooper) and 65 on Sullivan's Island, Charleston Co, 15 Jan (Kevin DeBoer).

Wilson's Snipe: 225 at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, during its CBC, 28 Dec (Ron Clark, Tom Ledford) and 85 at the Goldsboro WTP, Wayne Co, NC, 21 Jan (Sam Cooper) were noteworthy concentrations.

Red Phalarope: A moribund individual was found on the beach in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 15 Dec (Gilbert Grant). Red Phalaropes were seen on all four pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, this winter, with a

high count of 50 on 20 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Great Skua: An individual was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 14 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Pomarine Jaeger: Sightings of this jaeger species, less likely to be seen from shore than Parasitic Jaegers and thus noteworthy, were individuals at Hatteras Inlet, border of Dare Co and Hyde Co, NC, 29 Dec (Jeff Beane, et al.); off Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Jan (Ricky Davis); and off Bald Head Island, Brunswick Co, NC, 3 Jan (Steve Howell).

Parasitic Jaeger: Nine tallied on the Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands CBC, 3 Jan (*fide* Ron Clark) was the highest total, by far, on any Audubon CBC this year. Other sightings made from shore included three at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Dec (Sam Cooper); two off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 5 Dec (Cullen Hanks, Brian O'Shea) and 7 Dec (Brian Patteson); two off Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, SC, 7 Jan (Mayn Hipp); and two off Sullivan's Island, Charleston Co, SC, 23 Jan (Kevin DeBoer).

Dovekie: Only four were found this winter—counts of two on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 14 Feb and 20 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Razorbill: Though there was a definite movement of Razorbills off our coast during the late winter, numbers weren't close to those during strong irruption years. A few of the higher counts made from shore were 26 off Jennette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, 7 Feb (Erik Thomas); seven off Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 13 Feb (Sam Cooper); and 11 off Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 29 Feb (Greg Massey). Five moribund birds were found on the beach in Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 22 Feb (John Fussell). Counts made on the four pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in February were 211 on 6 Feb, 450 on 14 Feb, 179 on 20 Feb, and only 13 on 27 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Atlantic Puffin: Not seen every year in the Carolinas, ten puffins on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 6 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.) were good finds.

Black-legged Kittiwake: Sightings, all of first-winter birds, were made of one at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 7 Dec (Brian Patteson); one, possibly injured, photographed on the beach in Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 30 Jan (David & Susan Disher); and three on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 6 Feb (Patteson, et al.).

Little Gull: Only one was reported this winter—a first-winter individual seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 14 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Franklin's Gull: A first-year individual seen and photographed at Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 2 Dec (Doug Johnston) was a great find. Most sightings of this species in the Carolinas are made in fall, and there are only a handful of winter records.

Ring-billed Gull: Of interest, a leg-banded Ring-billed Gull seen on the

campus of Charleston Southern University, Charleston Co, SC, 20 Jan (Dennis Forsythe) was originally banded as an adult on an island in the St Lawrence River, east of Montreal, Canada, on 21 Jun 2013 (*fide* Matthew Campbell).

Thayer's Gull: An adult Thayer's Gull was seen and photographed at the Horry County Landfill, Horry Co, SC, 11 Jan (Chris Hill). Already accepted by the SC BRC, this sighting provided the first accepted record of this hard-to-identify gull in SC.

Iceland Gull: Numbers were down compared to previous winters with only three reported—a second-winter bird in Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 17 Jan (Lucas Bobay) and 23 Jan (Kate Sutherland) and two seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 14 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Lesser Black-backed Gull: As usual, the highest count on any Audubon CBC was made on the Cape Hatteras CBC, with 282 in Dare Co, NC, 27 Dec (*fide* Pat Moore). Inland sightings included one on Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, during its CBC, 3 Jan (Brian Bockhahn); one at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 13 Jan (Jacob Farmer) through 27 Feb (Harry LeGrand); and 16 at the South Wake County Landfill, Wake Co, NC, 6 Feb (Lucas Bobay, et al.).

Glaucous Gull: Individuals were seen on the Pamlico Sound in Hyde Co, NC, 5 Dec (Cullen Hanks, Brian O'Shea); on a spoil island near Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 3 Jan (Jeff Beane, et al.); at the Horry County Landfill, Horry Co, SC, in early January (Chris Hill); at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 16 Jan (Lucas Bobay); on the beach in Carova Beach, Currituck Co, NC, 18 Jan through 11 Feb (Michael Gosselin); at the Southern Wake County Landfill, Wake Co, NC, 6 Feb (Edward Landi, et al.); and on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 6 Feb, 14 Feb, 20 Feb, and 27 Feb (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Great Black-backed Gull: Farther inland than is typical were two at the Goldsboro WTP, Wayne Co, NC, 24 Jan (Sam Cooper); one at the South Wake County Landfill, Wake Co, NC, 6 Feb (Lucas Bobay, et al.); and one at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 20 Feb (Bruce Young, et al.).

Sandwich Tern: Late to depart were individuals at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Dec (Sam Cooper) and off the Oceanana Pier, Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (Chandra Biggerstaff).

Black Skimmer: A couple of the higher winter counts were 640 at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Dec (Sam Cooper) and 586 in Georgetown Co, SC, during the Litchfield-Pawleys Island CBC, 30 Dec (*fide* Chris Hill).

Eurasian Collared-Dove: 152 in Hyde Co, NC, during the Ocracoke Island CBC, 31 Dec (John Finnegan, et al.) was a remarkable count.

White-winged Dove: After one first visited a feeder in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 7 Jan, two were seen 23 Jan through 12 Feb, and one remained until 15 Feb (Dan Kendrick). After one was found at Bennetts Point, Colleton Co, SC, 30 Nov (David Youngblood, et al.), up to four were seen in that area in late January and early February (m. obs.). Individuals were seen in Kitty Hawk, Dare Co, NC, during its CBC, 19 Dec (Audrey Whitlock); at a feeder in



Burrowing Owl, 27 Feb 2016, New Hanover Co, NC. Photo by Sam Cooper.

Whispering Pines, Moore Co, NC, 8 Feb (John Formmeyer); and photographed in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 28 Feb and 3 Mar (Jeff Lewis).

Barn Owl: Four in Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 17 Dec (*fide* Lex Glover) was a record number for that count. One at Fort Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 1 Jan (Randy Newman) was locally unusual, though the species was relatively common there until about 1990. Remains of a Barn Owl were found near Reedy Creek Nature Preserve, Mecklenburg Co, 7 Dec (Leigh Anne Carter). Carter theorizes the owl may have been predated upon by a Great Horned Owl seen in that area.

Burrowing Owl: One seen on a jetty at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 27 Feb (Jamie Adams) was most likely the same individual seen at that site last November. It was seen by many birders through 11 Mar (Chandra Biggerstaff).

Short-eared Owl: The high count at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, was only three, 5 Dec (Steve Shultz), which was very low compared to previous years. Elsewhere, individuals were noted in the fields north of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, 5 Dec (Ed Corey, et al.); on Bald Head Island, Brunswick Co, NC, 3 Jan (Corey, David Howell); and in dunes at Ophelia Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, 27 Feb (Doug Pratt, Josh Southern).

Eastern Whip-poor-will: One flushed from a roadside at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 20 Dec (Chandra Biggerstaff, John Fussell) was a good find for December. Fussell theorizes the bird lingered due to the mild weather at the time.



Calliope Hummingbird, 19 Feb 2016, Graham, NC. Photo by Susan Campbell.

***Chaetura* species:** A swift, either a Chimney Swift or a Vaux's Swift, was seen at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, during the Savannah CBC, 2 Jan (George Owen, James Fleullan, et al.). Though never before documented in the Carolinas, Vaux's Swift would be just as likely in winter, if not more so, than the Chimney Swift.

Ruby-throated Hummingbird: Up to 19 wintered in a yard with feeders in Buxton, Dare Co, NC, this winter (Ann Maddock). 33 in Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* John Fussell) was a record number for that count.

Black-chinned Hummingbird: An adult male visited feeders in the Lighthouse Point subdivision on James Island, Charleston Co, SC, for a second year in a row, 25 Dec through 7 Mar (Jennifer Tyrrell, m. obs.).

Rufous Hummingbird: Two visited feeders in Seneca, Pickens Co, SC, 13 Dec into March (Kaye Fenlon). An adult female and an adult male mist-netted in a yard in Iredell Co, NC, 6 Jan, had both previously been banded in the same yard, three years ago and two years ago, respectively (Dwayne Martin).

Calliope Hummingbird: An immature male visited a feeder in Swepsonville, Alamance Co, NC, where it was banded, 19 Feb into March (Susan Campbell, m. obs.).

Buff-bellied Hummingbird: The individual that visited feeders along Royall Dr in Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, during the fall, continued through the winter (m. obs.).

Peregrine Falcon: Two wintered in downtown Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC (Ron Morris, m. obs.) this year. One was suspected of wintering in



Monk Parakeets at nest, 21 Feb 2016, Newland, NC. Photo by Richard Gray.

downtown Durham, Durham Co, NC, seen on multiple dates in February (Jesse Pope, m. obs.),

Monk Parakeet: Two seen around a nest at an electrical substation in Newland, Avery Co, NC, 16 Feb (Jesse Pope, Mickey Shortt) had, according to residents in the area, been seen around that site since April 2015.

***Empidonax* species:** A flycatcher belonging to the genus *Empidonax*, most likely a Least Flycatcher, was seen and photographed at Oleander Memorial Gardens in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, during its CBC, 2 Jan (Derb Carter, Jeff Pippen).

Ash-throated Flycatcher: Five were found in the Carolinas this winter—individuals seen and photographed at Hunting Island SP, Beaufort Co, SC, 8 Dec (Carl Berube); at Mackay Island NWR, Currituck Co, NC, 11 Dec (Karen & Tom Beatty); next to the “sparrow field” on the west side of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, 16 Dec (Lucas Bobay, Ed Corey); in Kitty Hawk, Dare Co, NC, during its CBC, 19 Dec (Lee Adams, Peggy Eubank); and at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, during its CBC, 30 Dec (Matthew King, Mike McCloy) and through 16 Jan (m. obs.).

Western Kingbird: Sightings included one photographed at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 6 Dec (Wendy Allen); up to three seen and photographed along Weston Rd near Cherry, Washington Co, NC, 2 Dec (Connie Toops) through 18 Jan (m. obs.); one near the Frisco Campground in Dare Co, NC, 29 Dec (Chuck Saleeby); and two at the Frisco Campground, 30 Dec (Alain Goulet, Frederic Hareau).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: One seen at Ft Moultrie National Monument,

Charleston Co, SC, 16 Dec (C.J. Jaworski) was especially unusual for the winter period.

Northern Rough-winged Swallow: One seen over a pond near where I-20 crosses the Saluda River in Lexington Co, SC, 11 Jan (Kent Bedenbaugh) was noteworthy for mid-winter.

Cliff Swallow: A juvenile Cliff Swallow photographed at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 4 Jan (Michael Gosselin) provided NC with its first winter record of this species.

Cave Swallow: A juvenile seen and photographed at Cane Creek Reservoir, Orange Co, NC, 2 Dec (Jan Hansen, et al.) was very unusual for a site away from the coast, providing the third record for the NC Piedmont. Along the coast, sightings included one over Mullet Pond, Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 6 Dec (Jan & Phil Fowler); two near the Oregon Inlet Fishing Center, Dare Co, NC, during the Bodie-Pea Island CBC, 28 Dec (John Fussell, Marcia Lyons); one over an impoundment near White Plains, Hyde Co, NC, during the Mattamuskeet NWR CBC, 29 Dec (Fussell); five over Eagle Island in Brunswick Co, NC, during the Wilmington CBC, 2 Jan (Ron Clark, m. obs.); one photographed over the south end of Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, SC, 3 Jan (Jay Chandler); and one over a campground near Shallotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 4 Jan (Taylor Piephoff).

Barn Swallow: Individuals lingered at the Brant Island spoil site, Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (Garrett Newman, Randy Newman); at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 1 Jan (Jeff Lewis); at Military Ocean Terminal Sunny Point, Brunswick Co, NC, during the Southport-Bald Head-Oak Islands CBC, 3 Jan (Sam Cooper, et al.); on the mainland near Sewee Bay, Charleston Co, SC, during the Charleston CBC, 3 Jan (*fide* Paul Nolan); on Edisto Island, Charleston Co, SC, 3 Jan (Sidney Gauthreaux); and at Magnolia Gardens, Charleston Co, SC, 21-24 Jan (Matt Johnson).

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: Eight at one spot along the NC-94 causeway at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 16 Jan (Jeff Lewis) was a noteworthy concentration for winter. Individuals were found at sites as far west as the wetland at Concord Mills, Cabarrus Co, NC, 5 Dec through 2 Jan (m. obs.); Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 12 Dec (Denise DuPon, et al.); Lake Cunningham, Greenville Co, SC, 19 Dec and 10 Jan (Joan Baker, et al.); and Salem, Oconee Co, SC, 3 Jan (Linda Montgomery, et al.).

Lapland Longspur: Individuals were found at Prater Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 3 Jan (Simon Harvey) and amongst a flock of pipits in a field adjacent to the KOA Campground along NC-481 in Halifax Co, NC, 14 Feb (Ricky Davis).

Snow Bunting: Individuals were seen and photographed around the jetty at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 5 Dec (Ricky Davis, Greg Hudson, Mike McCloy, et al.) and in the dunes on the southern Core Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 15 Dec (Jon Altman).



Snow Bunting, 05 Dec 2015, Oregon Inlet, NC. Photo by Greg Hudson.

Ovenbird: Nine in Buxton, Dare Co, NC, during the Cape Hatteras CBC, 27 Dec (*fide* Pat Moore) was a notable count. Individuals were seen in a yard in Carrboro, Orange Co, NC, 1-15 Dec (Jan Hansen); in a yard on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 12-13 Dec and 14 Feb (Jeff Lewis); at Caw Caw Interpretive Center, Charleston Co, SC, 21 Feb (Matt Johnson); and at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 26 Feb (Todd Arcos).

Louisiana Waterthrush: One video-recorded on Seabrook Island, Charleston Co, SC, 26 Feb (Tom Austin) was quite early to arrive.

Northern Waterthrush: Wintering individuals were noted at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, 31 Dec (Steve Calver); at Donnelley WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 1-2 Jan (Roger Smith, m. obs.); and at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 9 Jan (Mayn Hipp) and 14 Jan (Frank Lawkins).

Golden-winged Warbler: Extremely surprising was the female Golden-winged Warbler seen and photographed at Caw Caw Interpretive Center, Charleston Co, SC, 6 Feb (Keith McCullough, et al.) through 4 Mar (m. obs.). There are no previous winter records of this species in the Carolinas.

Orange-crowned Warbler: Two in Macon Co, NC, during the Franklin CBC, 2 Jan (*fide* Karen Lawrence) were very unusual for the mountain region.

Nashville Warbler: Rare wintering individuals were found near Historic Bethabara Park, Forsyth Co, NC, where photographed, during the Winston-Salem CBC, 19 Dec (Rob Rogers, Katherine Thorington, Cara & Tony Woods); in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, during its CBC, 2 Jan (Jeff Phippen); near the southeastern corner of Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 13 Jan through 3 Feb (Lucas Bobay, m. obs.); and at Airlie Gardens, New Hanover

Co, NC, 14-21 Feb (Matt Spangler, m. obs.).

Common Yellowthroat: An immature male photographed at Fletcher Park, Henderson Co, NC, 16 Jan (Simon Thompson) was a great find for the mountain region in winter.

American Redstart: An immature redstart at the north end of Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 5 Dec (Ricky Davis) was quite late to depart. Individuals at Riverbanks Zoo, Richland Co, SC, an adult female, photographed 8 Jan (Katie Henthorn) and along Laurel Hill Wildlife Dr at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 11 Feb (Peter Stangel) may have been over-wintering at those sites.

Cape May Warbler: Two were seen in NC this winter—an adult male photographed in Davidson, Mecklenburg Co, during the Southern Lake Norman CBC, 20 Dec (Taylor Piephoff, et al.) and an adult male photographed at a feeder in Apex, Wake Co, NC, 10 Feb (G. P.).

Northern Parula: An adult photographed in Bynum, Chatham Co, NC, 18 Dec (Mary Sonis) was either very late or attempting to over-winter, while one seen at Hunting Island SP, Beaufort Co, SC, 26 Feb (Roger Smith) was either very early or over-wintering.

Black-throated Blue Warbler: An adult male lingered in a yard in Hillsborough, Orange Co, NC, where photographed, until 9 Dec (Carol Tuskey).

“Audubon’s” Warbler: An Audubon’s Warbler, the western sub-species of Yellow-rumped Warbler, was found along the Carriage Trail at Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 6 Feb (Jack Rogers).

Yellow-throated Warbler: One photographed on a suet feeder in Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, 15 Feb (Tess Panfil) was unusually far from the coast for the winter season. One heard singing at Caw Caw Interpretive Center, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Feb (David McLean) was considered an early spring arrival.

Prairie Warbler: Notable counts for winter were three at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 13 Dec (John Fussell, et al.); four at different sites in Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* Fussell); three in Dare Co, NC, during the Cape Hatteras CBC, 27 Dec (Lee Adams, Jeff Lewis, et al.); and five at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access), Jasper Co, SC, 31 Dec (Steve Calver).

Wilson’s Warbler: Rare winter sightings were made of individuals in a yard in Greensboro, Guilford Co, NC, 3 Dec (Scott DePue); at Beaver Lake Bird Sanctuary, Buncombe Co, NC, through 5 Dec (Simon Thompson); and at The Bog Garden, Guilford Co, NC, 1 Jan (Henry Link, et al.) through 8 Jan (Carol Bowman).

Yellow-breasted Chat: Winter sightings included one in Georgetown Co, SC, during the Winyah Bay CBC, 17 Dec (*fide* Lex Glover); one on Figure Eight Island, New Hanover Co, NC, 20 Dec (Derb Carter); one at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 3 Jan (Dwayne Martin, et al.) through 6 Jan (Alan MacEachren); one photographed in Pasquotank Co, NC, 18 Jan (Greg

Hudson); and one at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 30 Jan (Ed Blitch, et al.).

Bachman's Sparrow: Winter sightings included one at the Savannah River Site (restricted access), Barnwell Co, SC, during its CBC, 18 Dec (Lois Stacey, Mark Vukovich); one on Ft Bragg (restricted access) in Hoke Co, NC, 20 Dec (Rex Badgett, et al.); three at Cheeha-Combahee Plantation (restricted access), Colleton Co, SC, 28 Dec (Lauren Morgens, Matthew Sarver); one along Funston Rd in Brunswick Co, NC, 2 Jan (Ricky Davis); six in recently-burned wiregrass habitat along Sam Hatcher Rd in Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 24 Jan (John Fussell, et al.); two in Francis Marion NF, Charleston Co, SC, 13 Feb (Kevin DeBoer); and three at Webb Wildlife Center, Hampton Co, SC, 29 Feb (Simon Thompson, et al.).

Clay-colored Sparrow: Interestingly, after counts of 17 birds there last winter and spring, this species was found at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, on only one occasion this winter—two birds on 14 Feb (Jamie Adams, John Fussell, Jack Fennell). Individuals were also found where Rocky Ford Rd crosses the South Fork Catawba River in Catawba Co, NC, 30 Dec (Monroe Pannell) and in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, during its CBC, 2 Jan (Daniel Hueholt).

Vesper Sparrow: 46 around Harleyville, Dorchester Co, SC, during the Four Holes Swamp CBC, 14 Dec (*fide* Matthew Johnson) was a record number for that count. Eight at Prater Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 3 Jan (Simon Harvey) and 20 at the Super Sod farm in Orangeburg Co, SC, 20 Feb (Ed Blitch) were also notable counts.

Lark Sparrow: A total of six adult birds were seen at two nearby sites along Newland Rd in Washington Co, NC, 5 Dec (Lucas Bobay, et al.). Individuals were seen near Coastal Carolina University, Horry Co, SC, 24 Dec through 14 Feb (Chris Hill); on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 31 Dec and 1 Jan (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.); and around the NC Coastal Federation building in Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, 2 Jan (Jeff Pippen) into spring (m. obs.).

Grasshopper Sparrow: Individuals were seen at the Savannah River Site (restricted access), Barnwell Co, SC, 18 Dec (Mark Vukovich, Lois Stacey); in the northeast corner of Calhoun Co, SC, during the Congaree Swamp CBC, 20 Dec (Cathy Miller); at Carolina Sandhills NWR, Chesterfield Co, SC, 28 Dec (Susan Mac, Steve McInnis); at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 30 Jan (Ron Furnish, Marie Mullins) and 28 Feb (Steve Collins); and at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 19 Feb (Kevin Kubach).

Henslow's Sparrow: Six at the Savannah River Site (restricted access), Barnwell Co, SC, 18 Dec (Mark Vukovich, Lois Stacey) was a good count. One found in a powerline corridor in the Southwest Prong Flatwoods Natural Area, part of the Croatan NF, near Havelock, Craven Co, NC, 4 Dec (John Fussell) was the only report from NC.

Le Conte's Sparrow: Five at the Savannah Spoil Site (restricted access),



Indigo Bunting, 11 Jan 2016, Randolph Co, NC. Photo by Valerie Abbott.

Jasper Co, SC, during its CBC, 2 Jan (Lauren Morgens, Matthew Sarver) was a nice concentration.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Four in a clear-cut area near Mill Creek, Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (John Fussell) was a great count. Fussell notes that “newly clearcut areas with a dense growth of fine grasses on hydric soils are obviously the best habitat for this species.” Individuals were seen at the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 6 Dec (David Howell); in a clear-cut area along County Line Rd in Craven Co, NC, during the New Bern CBC, 14 Dec (Chandra Biggerstaff, Fussell); at the “sparrow field” on the western side of Lake Phelps, Washington Co, NC, 16 Dec (John Haire) and 28 Dec (Derb Carter, Harry LeGrand); near Gadsden, Richland Co, SC, 20 Dec (Caroline Eastman); at Renaissance Park Golf Course, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 26 Dec (Taylor Piephoff) through 18 Jan (Dennis Kent); at a private farm near Southport, Brunswick Co, NC, 3 Jan (Sherry Lane, Bruce Smithson); and at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 28 Feb (Steve Collins).

White-crowned Sparrow: 24 at Dobbins Farm in Townville, Anderson Co, SC, 13 Feb (Drew Lanham) was our region's high count.

Summer Tanager: Two visited feeders in the NC coastal plain this winter—a male in New Bern, Craven Co, early January through 12 Feb (Olwen Jarvis) and a female, possibly the same individual that wintered there last year, in Jackeys Creek Estates, Brunswick Co, 3 Dec into spring (Greg Massey). A dull-plumaged female was seen at Cheeha-Combahee Plantation (restricted access), Colleton Co, SC, 28 Dec (Lauren Morgens, Matthew Sarver).

Western Tanager: Sightings included a female visiting a feeder in Greenville, Pitt Co, NC, where photographed, 16 Jan through 13 Feb (Rick Trone); an adult male visiting a feeder in Rockville, Charleston Co, SC, where photographed, 25 Jan (Cherrie Sneed); and an immature male on Figure Eight Island, New Hanover Co, NC, 15 Feb (Derb Carter).

Rose-breasted Grosbeak: One photographed at Hunting Island SP, Beaufort Co, SC, 8 Dec (Joe Jungers) and 16 Dec (Victor Fazio) was quite late to depart. One seen at Charleston Southern University, Charleston Co, SC, 26 Jan (Chris Snook) may have been over-wintering in the area.

Indigo Bunting: Three were found in NC this winter—a female seen and photographed at Tanglewood Park, Forsyth Co, 4 Jan (John Haire) and 13 Jan (David & Susan Disher, Marbry Hopkins); a male photographed at the NC Zoological Park, Randolph Co, 11 Jan (Valerie Abbott); and a male photographed at a feeder in Apex, Wake Co, 15 Feb into spring (John Amoroso).

Painted Bunting: Farther inland than typical were individuals visiting feeders in Charlotte, Mecklenburg Co, NC, an adult male, 20 Jan (Mary & Paul Buckle) through 26 Jan (Kevin Burrell) and near Duncan Park, Spartanburg Co, SC, an adult male, from late January into spring (Lyle Campbell, et al.). Interestingly, the yard in Charlotte is only 1.3 miles from where a green-colored bird visited a feeder 6 Feb 2015. Was that green-colored bird a first-year male and are both sightings of that same individual? A few of the higher counts at coastal sites were eight, seven of which were banded, visiting a feeder in Manteo, Dare Co, NC, throughout the winter (*fide* Jeff Lewis); four visiting a feeder in Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 9 Dec into early January (Dick & Dorothy Rosche); four in Carteret Co, NC, during the Morehead City CBC, 20 Dec (*fide* John Fussell); and five at Botany Bay WMA, Charleston Co, SC, 31 Jan (Pam Ford, Chris Snook).

Dickcissel: An adult female photographed in Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 25 Dec (Alan MacEachren) was unusual for the winter season.

Yellow-headed Blackbird: One was found amongst a large blackbird flock in southeast Florence Co, SC, 7 Feb (Jay Chandler). An adult male was photographed inside a mixed blackbird flock on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 22 Feb (Carl Freeman).

Rusty Blackbird: A few of the higher counts were 180 at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 4 Dec (Kevin Kubach); 1350 at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 8 Dec (Mike McCloy); 500 near Moore, Spartanburg Co, SC, during the Spartanburg CBC, 31 Dec (Lyle Campbell, Steve Compton); 325 at Lake Sutton, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Jan (Ricky Davis); 200 at the Battleship Memorial in New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Jan (Susan Blackford, Jan Hansen); and 125 in the Bluff Unit of Santee NWR, Clarendon Co, SC, 15 Jan (Royce Hough, Ron Morris, et al.).

Brewer's Blackbird: Five were found in a muddy horse enclosure along

Gum Swamp Rd in Lake Landing, Hyde Co, NC, during the Mattamuskeet NWR CBC, 29 Dec (John Fussell). Many birders visited the site in the following months with a high count of seven made there 17 Jan (Ed Corey, et al.), and one remaining through 12 Mar (Mandy Cumming). In SC, six were seen in southern Orangeburg Co, 13 Feb (Dennis Forsythe).

Baltimore Oriole: As many as 25 visited grape jelly feeders in Orangeburg, Orangeburg Co, SC, in January and February (Lex Glover, et al.). 18 at feeders in Wilson, Wilson Co, NC, 15 Feb (Ann Brice) was also a notable count.

Scott's Oriole: Already accepted by the SC BRC was the state's first record of Scott's Oriole—a male seen and photographed visiting a suet feeder in Six Mile, Pickens Co, SC, 1 Jan (Imtiaz Haque) through 7 Jan (Paul Serridge).

CORRIGENDA

2014 South Carolina Spring Bird Counts:

The report for the 2014 South Carolina Spring Bird Counts (Chat 79: 1-11) contained two errors. In the checklist, the number of Surf Scoter observed should be 3, not 43 (p. 6). In the first sentence of the third paragraph of the compilers' comments for the Charleston / Berkeley Counties count (p. 4), the text should read "reported 3 Surf Scoters", not White-winged Scoters.

2015 Report of the South Carolina Bird Records Committee:

Due to oversights by the committee chair, the South Carolina Bird Records Committee omitted from its annual report (Chat 80: 18-25) the dates of 12 of the sightings. The missing dates are as follows:

accepted reports:

2015-054 Fulvous Whistling Duck 28 August 2015

2015-033 Trindade Petrel 28 June 2011

2015-036 Fea's Petrel 9 November 1984

2015-040 Roseate Spoonbill 29 August 2015

2015-035 Black-chinned Hummingbird 6 February to 5 April 2015

2015-020 Gray Kingbird 6 September 2004

2015-051 Yellow-rumped "Audubon's" Warbler 30 March 2014

2016-001 Scott's Oriole 1 January 2016

non-accepted reports:

2014-024 Red-necked Grebe 5 March 2014

2015-042 Calliope Hummingbird 2 October 2015

2015-019 Gray Kingbird 1 September 2007

2015-030 Bullock's Oriole 31 January 2012

In addition, one date was reported incorrectly. The correct date for the Ruff #2015-041 at Santee Coastal Preserve is 15 March 2015.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes. Pay dues or make donations at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/dues/>. Make change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile/>. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/about.html>. Dues include \$6 for subscription to the *CBC Newsletter* and \$7 for subscription to *The Chat*.

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The Chat

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612



Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

Periodicals Postage Paid
at Pinehurst, NC 28374 and
additional mailing offices

The Chat

Vol. 80

SUMMER 2016

No. 3



The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Vol. 80

SUMMER 2016

No. 3

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North Carolina

South Carolina

Briefs for the Files

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THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612. Individual subscription price \$25 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Pinehurst, NC and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE CHAT, Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst NC 28374.

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Cover: Northern Saw-whet Owl (fledgling), June 13, 2014, Devil's Courthouse, Blue Ridge Parkway, NC.
Photo by Scott Winton.

2015 Fall Bird Counts in South Carolina

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Five counts were held for the 2015 Fall Bird Count. The counts were held September 5 through October 9 in Greenville, Spartanburg, Cherokee, and Aiken counties and Congaree National Park. In spite of rainy weather on several of the counts, dedicated participants managed to generate some respectable numbers. Seventy-two observers in the field and 29 at feeders recorded a total of 146 species and 13935 individuals. The species total was better than the 142 reported last year but well short of the high of 168 in 2011. The number of warbler species reported, 27, was an improvement over last year's 24.

Greenville County: September 26/27, 100 species, 4130 individuals

Compiler: Paul Serridge

4 Audrey Lane

Greenville, SC 29615

Participants: Joan Baker, Shelby Birch, Jeff Click, Don Cox, Steve Cox, Donnie Coody, Denise DuPon, Ed Engasser, Ruth Engasser, Chip Gilbert, Sara Gilbert, Joyce Hall, Simon Harvey, Peter Hens, Genny Hill, JB Hines, Rob Hunnings, Jerry Johnson, Len Kopka, Jane Kramer, Tim Lee, Yves Limpalair, Cathy McClintock, Eric McFalls, Chris Peak, Jim Pirrone, Merikay Pirrone, Charlie Rucinski, Barbara Serridge, Paul Serridge, Judith Webb, Art Young, Susan Zickos.

The count was originally scheduled for Saturday, September 26 with Sunday as the rain date. The weather was not conducive to birding on either day with very low cloud, mist, periods of rain, moderate wind, and less than perfect visibility. The decision on whether to bird on Saturday or postpone until Sunday was taken by individual leaders. The weather was marginally better on Sunday.

Twelve parties covered different areas of Greenville County, 4 on Saturday, 8 on Sunday. In addition, several individuals reported birds at backyard feeders or from spots not covered by parties.

One hundred species were reported, with a total of 4130 individuals. Those figures are similar to the averages over the past 10

years: 103 and 4448 respectively. Thanks to the commitment of all, we had a reasonable count in spite of the weather.

A Vesper Sparrow at Wilson's Farm was a first for a Fall Count, bringing the total species reported since we started keeping records to 156. At the other end of the birding spectrum a House Sparrow reported from a feeder was the only one of that species reported during the count. Only 1 House Sparrow in Greenville County?

Some expected species were not reported, in part because of the weather. For example, the weather wiped out the hawk watch at Caesar's Head and so there were no Broad-winged Hawks. Similarly, the weather put paid to any nocturnal birding and so no Eastern Screech-Owl was reported. But how does one explain a complete absence of Common Grackles in Greenville County over the 2 days of the count? Birding is certainly serendipitous.

Many thanks to all who participated, especially the leaders who submitted detailed reports in a very short time.

Spartanburg County: September 5, 91 species, 5009 individuals

Compiler: Lyle Campbell

126 Greengate Lane

Spartanburg, SC 29307-2215

Participants: Carole Anderson, Tom Broom, Tim Brown, Dan Bryant, David Campbell, Lyle Campbell, Sarah Campbell, Timothy Campbell, Alan Chalmers, Amy Coker, Cheryl Cooksey, Ed Elam, Kathleen Elam, Frank Guida, J. B. Hines, Frank Hull, Phyllis Hull, Jack Jennings, Nancy Mandlove, Joe Mitchell, Roberta Mitchell, Bill Myers, Mary Ann Myers, Eva Pratt, Sam Pratt, Doug Rayner, Stan Sargent, Elizabeth Storm, Jon Storm, Melissa Storm, Merike Tamm, Kristin Taylor, Kay Wealden, Richard Wealden, Dan Wootton, Nancy Wootton

Spartanburg had a fair Fall Count, considering that several key birders were not able to participate this year. We had 91 total species, including 11 warbler species. Sparrows and blackbirds were scarce. One chimney attracted 1200 migrating Chimney Swifts at dusk. Best birds were a Little Blue Heron, Barn Owl, and a Swainson's Warbler.

Cherokee County: September 13, 67 species, 1585 individuals

Compiler: Lyle Campbell

126 Greengate Lane

Spartanburg, SC 29307

Participants: David Campbell, Timothy Campbell, Claude Cobb, J. B. Hines, Karla Lavender, Tre Gee Parker

Six Cherokee Count birders found 67 species, including 5 species of warblers. Best warbler was a Blackburnian. The best bird in the area did not make the count. Claude Cobb observed a Swallow-tailed Kite during the week before count day, the first record we are aware of for Cherokee County.

Aiken County: October 9, 114 species, 2783 individuals

Compiler: Anne Waters
1621 Apple Valley Dr.
Augusta, GA 30906

Participants: Larry Eldridge, Eric Haskell, Paul Koehler, Willie Malpass, Julie Mobley, Eric Monaco, Mary Pallon, Lois Stacey, Peter Stangel, Mark Vukovich, Alice Walker, Doug Walker, Anne Waters, Calvin Zippler

Congaree National Park: September 27, 65 species, 506 individuals

Compiler: John Grego
Participants: Ron Ahle, Blaney Coskrey, John Grego, Fiona Hawley, Miriam Oudejans, David Schuetrum, Warren Steckle

A Fall 2015 Migration Count was held September 27 at Congaree National Park on an alternately overcast and rainy day. Nocturnal birding was slow but did result in a couple of owl and thrush species. Friends of Congaree Swamp sponsored an organized walk on the Low Boardwalk and Sims Trail in the morning, and a portion of this group later visited the east end of the park in the afternoon. Another small party covered other portions of the park during the morning. Migrants were active throughout the morning along the Low Boardwalk and Sims Trail, and many of them were foraging low, so party members had good looks at warblers, thrushes and cuckoos in spite of the generally poor viewing conditions. It was a particular treat to see Wood Thrush foraging on the ground at more than one location.

Conditions were worse in the afternoon, and a visit to the eastern portion of the park did not boost our species count as much as in the past.

Table 1. Fall 2015 bird counts in South Carolina

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck				2		2
Canada Goose	259	347	30	33		669
Wood Duck	50	7		31		88
Mallard	65	78	2	2		147

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
Blue-winged Teal				2		2
Green-winged Teal				1		1
Northern Bobwhite				1		1
Wild Turkey	50	4	3	2		59
Pied-billed Grebe	1			1		2
Double-crested Cormorant			4			4
Anhinga				10		10
Great Blue Heron	8	20	5	5	1	39
Great Egret	2	1	1	13		17
Little Blue Heron		1		2		3
Cattle Egret				7		7
Green Heron	2	4				6
White Ibis					1	1
Black Vulture	49	33	8	58	13	161
Turkey Vulture	28	23	23	21	4	99
Osprey	2	1	3	1		7
Bald Eagle			1			1
Northern Harrier	1	2		1		4
Sharp-shinned Hawk		2	1	1		4
Cooper's Hawk	1	2				3
Red-shouldered Hawk	9	10	2	15	6	42
Red-tailed Hawk	8	11	3	2	1	25
American Coot	1					1
Killdeer	29	6	49	24	4	112
Spotted Sandpiper		1			1	2
Solitary Sandpiper			4			4
Greater Yellowlegs				4		4
Lesser Yellowlegs				8		8
Least Sandpiper				33		33
Dunlin				1		1
Least Sandpiper				31		31
Western Sandpiper				1		1
Rock Pigeon	9	34	51	12		106
Eurasian Collared-Dove	6	12		7		25
Mourning Dove	196	383	175	63	3	820
Yellow-billed Cuckoo			3	10	10	23
Barn Owl		2				2
Eastern Screech-Owl				10	1	11
Great Horned Owl	3	3		3		9
Barred Owl	1	3		11	9	24
Common Nighthawk		24				24
Chimney Swift	269	2146	19	1	18	2453
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	239	77	4		2	322
Belted Kingfisher	11	9	1	7	3	31
Red-headed Woodpecker	10	14	8	26	2	60
Red-bellied Woodpecker	51	31	7	80	15	184
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		3		9		12
Downy Woodpecker	34	18	4	39	7	102
Hairy Woodpecker	6	3	1	2	1	13
Red-cockaded Woodpecker				2		2
Northern Flicker	5	1	3	57	3	69
Pileated Woodpecker	15	11	2	27	12	67
American Kestrel	4	1	1	6	2	14
Peregrine Falcon	1					1
Eastern Wood-Pee wee	37	8	10	10	4	69
Acadian Flycatcher				1	5	6
Eastern Phoebe	49	17	2	46		114

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
Great Crested Flycatcher		5	2	1		8
Eastern Kingbird		2	1			3
Loggerhead Shrike	1					1
White-eyed Vireo	3	10	9	23	24	69
Blue-headed Vireo	4			1	1	6
Red-eyed Vireo	8	1	3	11	1	24
Blue Jay	202	109	67	101	5	484
American Crow	510	176	69	149	13	917
Fish Crow	21	6	2	24	19	72
Common Raven	4					4
Purple Martin		6				6
Tree Swallow	1			7		8
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	1			264	68	333
Barn Swallow	1	1		12	1	15
Carolina Chickadee	128	64	28	86	17	323
Tufted Titmouse	103	65	24	101	23	316
White-breasted Nuthatch	21	19	3	16	3	62
Brown-headed Nuthatch	14	16	5	41	2	78
House Wren	1	2		5		8
Carolina Wren	110	77	33	104	23	347
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	2	8	2	3	2	17
Ruby-crowned Kinglet				8		8
Eastern Bluebird	170	179	51	46	1	447
Veery	1				1	2
Gray-cheeked Thrush					4	4
Swainson's Thrush	3			4	5	12
Hermit Thrush	1					1
Wood Thrush	4			2	12	18
American Robin	104	26	12	14		156
Gray Catbird	37	4		21	4	66
Brown Thrasher	34	10	2	50	3	99
Northern Mockingbird	57	59	10	53		179
European Starling	255	200	204	188		847
Cedar Waxwing		26				26
Ovenbird	6			1	1	8
Worm-eating Warbler	4				1	5
Northern Waterthrush		1		2		3
Blue-winged Warbler				2		2
Black-and-white Warbler	7			8	5	20
Prothonotary Warbler		1		1	1	3
Swainson's Warbler		1				1
Tennessee Warbler	8	1		4		13
Common Yellowthroat	10	2	1	12	10	35
Hooded Warbler	7		2	2	1	12
American Redstart	26	1		17	19	63
Cape May Warbler	2			1		3
Northern Parula	3			21	26	50
Magnolia Warbler	12	1		8	4	25
Bay-breasted Warbler				2		2
Blackburnian Warbler			1	2		3
Yellow Warbler	1	1				2
Chestnut-sided Warbler	12	1		1	1	15
Blackpoll Warbler				1		1
Black-throated Blue Warbler	5				2	7
Palm Warbler	7			48		55
Pine Warbler	8	6	6	67	8	95

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
Yellow-rumped Warbler		1		3		4
Yellow-throated Warbler	3	2		2		7
Prairie Warbler	3		1	1		5
Black-throated Green Warbler	4			1		5
Yellow-breasted Chat	1				1	2
Eastern Towhee	20	8	4	43	3	78
Chipping Sparrow	21	13	28	18		80
Field Sparrow	18	4	8			30
Vesper sparrow	1					1
Savannah Sparrow				1		1
Grasshopper Sparrow		1				1
Song Sparrow	14	2	2	1		19
Dark-eyed Junco	2					2
Summer Tanager	2	1	3	6	2	14
Scarlet Tanager	14	1		3		18
Northern Cardinal	142	175	20	122	43	502
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	16		1	3		20
Blue Grosbeak	8	5		4		17
Indigo Bunting	98	3	5	30	6	142
Painted Bunting				1		1
Red-winged Blackbird	55		1	2		58
Eastern Meadowlark	12	6	2	1		21
Common Grackle		116	506	250	1	873
Brown-headed Cowbird	7	9	5	10		31
Orchard Oriole		3	1			4
Purple Finch		8				8
House Finch	41	80		1		122
American Goldfinch	129	118	17	1	8	273
House Sparrow	1	13	14	33		61
Species	100	91	67	114	63	146
Individuals	4130	5009	1585	2783	428	13935
Regular Count						
Hours foot	46.75	30.5	10	32.5	14	133.75
Hours car	15.85	27	4.5	16.25		63.6
Hours canoe/kayak	0.75					0.75
Miles foot	31	23.5	6	13.75	9.2	83.45
Miles car	259	420	120	114.5		913.5
Miles canoe/kayak	1					1
# Regular parties	12	17	3	9	2	43
# Regular observers	33	22	6	14	7	72
#Species		85	67	113		
#Individuals		2278	1575	2718		
Feeder Watch						
Hours Feeder Watch		60.5	7	3		70.5
#Feeder Watchers		23	3	3		29
#Feeder Stations		14	2	3		19
#Species		47	4	15		
#Individuals		679	10	35		724
Nocturnal						
Hours Nocturnal		2.5	0.5	2.75	2.25	8
Miles Nocturnal		6	0	6.5	6	18.5

	Greenv	Spart	Cherok	Aiken	Congar	Total
#parties nocturnal		5	1	2		8
#observers nocturnal		7	2	2		11
#Species		5	0	7		
#Individuals		2052	0	30		2082
Total						
Party Hours	68.1	120.5	22	51.5	16.25	278.35
Party Miles	291	449.5	126	134.75	15.2	1016.45
Time start	0645	0700	0700	0530	0445	
Time stop	1845	2200	2100	1630	1700	
Temperature: pre-dawn						
dawn		70	68	62		
AM	62	68	67	62		
noon		72	70	66		
PM	72	78	74	73		
sunset		85	76	81		
night		78	70	79		
		75	66	78		
wind: pre-dawn						
dawn				0		
AM	<12			0		
noon	<12			0		
PM	<12			0		
sunset	<12			0		
night						
%clouds: pre-dawn						
dawn	100		100	100	100	
AM	100		100	100	100	
noon	100		100	60	100	
PM	100		100	75	100	
sunset	100		100	100	100	
night			100	100		
precipitation: pre-dawn						
dawn		0	light	0		
AM	rain	0	light	0		
noon	rain	0	light	0		
PM	rain	0	light	0		
sunset	rain	0	light	0		
night		0	light			

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Spring 2016, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

Winter	December 1 - February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1 - May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1 - July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1 - November 30	due December 20

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Reports published herein may include sightings that require review by the state bird record's committee. Such reports are not considered accepted records until, and unless, they are so ruled by the committee.

Abbreviations: **BBS** – Breeding Bird Survey, **BRC** – Bird Records Committee, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **Ft** – Fort, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **NC** – North Carolina, **NF** – National Forest, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **TS** – Tropical Storm, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: Two photographed in Clarks Hill, McCormick Co, SC, 21 May (Nathan Hollinger) were unusual for a site so far from the coast. One seen and photographed in Boiling Spring Lakes, Brunswick Co, NC, in early May (Brad Powers) was the only sighting from NC during the spring.

Greater White-fronted Goose: Quite late to depart were individuals seen and photographed amongst Canada Geese along Brighton Park Blvd in Berkeley Co, SC, 1 May (Tom Austin) through 16 May (Matthew Campbell) and on Lake Marion in the southeastern corner of Calhoun Co, SC, 24 May (Donna & Harold Donnelly, et al.).

Ross's Goose: Spring sightings included two on Deer Lake in Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 2 Mar (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); one on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 1 Apr (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, et al.); and one in Bent Creek, Buncombe Co, NC, 2 Apr (Denise Hargrove).

Tundra Swan: Lingering in the Lake Landing impoundments of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, were two on 7 May (Mike McCloy) and one until 24 May (Nate Swick).

Eurasian Wigeon: A drake found in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 17 Apr (Ricky Davis) was somewhat late to depart.

Northern Pintail: Individual drakes lingered at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, SC, 14 May (Pam Ford, Andy Harrison, Craig Watson) and in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 29 May (Mike McCloy, Mike Stewart).

Green-winged Teal: Late to depart were two on the barrier strand next to the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 15 May (John Fussell, et al.); one at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 28 May (David Youngblood); and four in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 29 May (Mike McCloy, Mike Stewart).

Greater Scaup: A drake in the Mulberry Fields along the Yadkin River Greenway, Wilkes Co, NC, 24 May (Guy McGrane) and 25 May (Issac Kerns) was both late and locally unusual.

Common Eider: After the first-winter drake around Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, was last seen 12 Mar (Andy Harrison), one, probably the same individual, was photographed from the Cherry Grove Pier, Horry Co, SC, 16 Mar (Lou Carpenter). Another first-winter drake, or possibly the same individual, around Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 21 May (Steve Howell) through 29 May (Lucas Bobay, Paul Taillie) was rather late.

Surf Scoter: At inland sites, sightings were made of two, a drake and a hen on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 15 Mar (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, m. obs.) and three, two drakes and one hen, on Mayo Reservoir, Person Co, NC, 23 Apr (David Pennebaker).

White-winged Scoter: A hen amongst Black Scoters off Kiawah Island,

Charleston Co, SC, 26 May (Juliana Smith) was rather late.

Hooded Merganser: Breeding was confirmed at four sites in central NC—at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, when a hen and 11 juveniles were seen 10-17 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Jacob Farmer, m. obs.); in the Little Creek Waterfowl Impoundment, Durham Co, when a hen and seven juveniles were seen 7 May (Edward Landi); at Lake Betz, Wake Co, when three juveniles were seen 12 May (Eddie Owens); and at Sandy Creek Park, Durham Co, when nine ducks including juveniles were seen 14 May (Kent Fiala).

Common Merganser: Spring sightings included two drakes on Lake Junaluska, Haywood Co, NC, 5-7 Mar (Connie & Stan Wulkowicz, m. obs.); a hen photographed amongst Red-breasted Mergansers on Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, SC, 6 Mar (Chris Davies, Pam Ford) and 19 Mar (Wendy Allen); two, a drake and a hen, photographed on the Dan River in Stokes Co, NC, 9 Mar (Ed Corey); two, a drake and a hen, on Lake Lure, Rutherford Co, NC, 2 Apr (Ryan Lubbers); a drake on the French Broad River in Buncombe Co, NC, 4 Apr (Kevin Burke); a hen photographed in the Green River Game Land, Polk Co, NC, 15 Apr (Aaron Steed, et al.); and two, a drake and a hen, on the Tuckasegee River near Dillsboro, Jackson Co, NC, 24 Apr (Paul Carroll). The latter two sightings likely involved ducks attempting to breed in those areas.

Red-breasted Merganser: 28 on Lake Julian, Buncombe Co, NC, 12 Apr (Wayne Forsythe) was a notable count for the mountain region during the spring.

Ruddy Duck: Two, a drake and a hen, photographed at James Island County Park, Charleston Co, NC, 30 May (Carl & Cathy Miller) were rather late.

Red-throated Loon: Two of the higher concentrations of northbound migrants were 1250 off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 20 Mar (John Fussell, et al.) and 500 off Jeannette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, in the span of 15 minutes, 22 Mar (Sam Cooper).

Horned Grebe: Late to depart were individuals at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 21 May (Sam Cooper) and at the WTP in Hemingway, Williamsburg Co, SC, 30 May (Jay Chandler).

Red-necked Grebe: Individuals were seen off Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 5 Mar (Marty Wall) and off Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 13-14 Mar (Keith Rutter). A report of four at Murrells Inlet, Georgetown Co, SC, 6 Mar (Anne-Marie & Bob Taylor) would provide a new record high count for SC if accurate.

Eared Grebe: One was found at the WTP in Jacksonville, Onslow Co, NC, during the Onslow Co Spring Bird Count, 30 Apr (Barbara Gould, Guy McGrane, Andy Webb).

Western Grebe: One was seen in a cove near the Reeds Creek arm of Lake Norman in Iredell Co, NC, 10 Apr (Taylor Piephoff) through 30 Apr (Ian



Western Grebe, 10 Apr 2016, Lake Norman, Iredell Co, NC. Photo by Lee Weber.

Ruppenthal). This sighting was the first for that county, though not for Lake Norman, and fifth for the NC Piedmont.

Trindade Petrel: It was a good spring for this species, with seven individuals seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in late May and early June—two, one dark-morph and one intermediate-morph, 20 May; two dark-morph, 22 May; two, one dark-morph and one light-morph, 30 May; and one light-morph, 5 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Fea's Petrel: It was also a good spring for Fea's Petrels, with six found on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in late May and early June—one on 23 May; one on 29 May; one on 30 May; one on 31 May; and two on 2 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Cory's Shearwater: The passage of TS Bonnie off the NC coast in late May produced easterly winds that pushed Cory's Shearwaters closer to shore than typical. A couple of the higher from-shore counts during this period included 37 off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, 30 May (Marty Wall) and 33 off Cape Point, Dare Co, 30 May (Lucas Bobay).

Sooty Shearwater: A few of the higher from-shore counts were 44 off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 20 May (Lucas Bobay); 12 off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 29 May (Marty Wall, et al.); and 25 off Cape Point, 29 May (Bobay, Paul Taillie).

Wilson's Storm-Petrel: The passage of TS Bonnie off the NC coast in late May resulted in several from-shore sightings—three off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, 29-31 May (John Fussell, Marty Wall, et al.); three off Cape Point, Dare Co, 29 May (Lucas Bobay, Paul Taillie); and eight off Cape Point, 30 May (Bobay).



Brown Booby, 31 May 2016, Lake Norman, Catawba Co, NC. Photo by Lori Owenby.

European Storm-Petrel: This very rare vagrant was seen and photographed on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 10 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.). Patteson noted that this European Storm-Petrel sighting “was the best we ever had” with the bird “very close to the boat for long periods . . . at least four hours!”

White-tailed Tropicbird: An adult was seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 31 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Red-billed Tropicbird: After an adult was first reported around the Salt Pond at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 29 Mar (Steven Freed), another adult, probably the same individual, was seen at that site 18 Apr (Katie Walker) and over nearby Sandy Bay in Hatteras, when photographed, 25 Apr (Dan Berard, m. obs.) and 26 Apr (Andrew Thornton). This species has been seen around the Salt Pond at Cape Point in years past, in 2009, 2011, and 2013, always between March and June. On pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, an adult was seen 24 May and an immature was seen 3 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Wood Stork: One in Townville, Anderson Co, SC, 28 May (Brian Barchus, et al.) was farther inland than is typical for the species during the spring.

Magnificent Frigatebird: Individuals were seen off Pawleys Island,

Georgetown Co, SC, 11 May (Clyde Kessler); over James Island, Charleston Co, SC, 13 May (Jennifer Koches, Dennis Forsythe); and over the Broad River in Beaufort Co, SC, 19 May (Buddy Campbell).

Masked Booby: One was seen and photographed on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Brian Patteson, et al.). It had been four years since the last time this species was found during a spring pelagic trip.

Brown Booby: An adult female seen and photographed at Lookout Shoals Lake, border of Catawba Co and Iredell Co, NC, 28 May (Nicholas Ottone) remained at that site into summer, where it was seen by many birders. Already accepted by the NC BRC, this sighting provided NC with its first inland record of this oceanic species.

Great Cormorant: Five lingered at Masonboro Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, until the late date of 29 May (Sam Cooper). Individuals were also noted off Federal Point at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Mar (Andrew Thornton); on the remnant pilings of the Ocean City Pier in North Topsail Beach, Onslow Co, NC, 20 Apr (Gilbert Grant); and in Alligator Bay, Onslow Co, NC, 21 Apr (Grant).

Anhinga: 250 around active nests at the “Old Gravel Quarry” (restricted access) in Dyers Hill, Marlboro Co, SC, 23 May (Mac Williams) was an impressive concentration.

American White Pelican: One seen and photographed on Lake James in McDowell Co, NC, 8 May (Ryan McLaughlin) through 28 May (Gordon Warburton) was a good find for a site in the NC foothills. 110 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 26 May (Cherrie Sneed) was an impressive count.

American Bittern: 11 in the PotashCorp Wetland Mitigation Site in southern Beaufort Co, NC, 6 Apr (Sam Cooper) was a nice concentration.

Least Bittern: Four heard calling in the marsh at the northeast end of Harris Lake, Wake Co, NC, 23 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Ed Corey, Sam Jolly) were great finds for a site outside of the coastal plain. Six were also heard calling in the same area the following day, 24 Apr (Corey, Neil Skoog).

Little Egret: Already accepted by the NC BRC was the state’s first record of Little Egret. This vagrant from Eurasia was seen and photographed in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 29 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly) through 9 May (Brad Wood).

Little Blue Heron: Nesting was confirmed at the “Old Gravel Quarry” (restricted access) in Dyers Hill, Marlboro Co, SC, when multiple nests with eggs were seen, 23 May (Mac Williams).

Cattle Egret: 600 around 100 active nests at the “Old Gravel Quarry” (restricted access) in Dyers Hill, Marlboro Co, SC, 23 May (Mac Williams) was an incredible count.

Reddish Egret: Individuals were found on Hilton Head Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 6 Mar (Jack Colcolough); on Capers Island, Charleston Co, SC, 7 May (Elizabeth Anderegg); on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston



Little Egret, 06 May 2016, Lake Mattamuskeet, NC. Photo by Phil Fowler.

Co, SC, 10 May (David Gardner, et al.); and on a spoil island off Ocracoke, Hyde Co, NC, where photographed, 27 May (Matt Spangler).

Yellow-crowned Night-Heron: A pair of adults seen tending to a nest near Cramerton, Gaston Co, NC, 2 May (Steve Tracy) were a first for that county.

Glossy Ibis: Thirty photographed in flight over Mountain Island Lake, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 2 Apr (Barry Rowan) were noteworthy for a site so far from the coast. 385 at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 17 Apr (Ricky Davis) was a fantastic count for any site. 70 at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 1 May (John Fussell, et al.) was a good count for that site.

White-faced Ibis: After two were found amongst Glossy Ibises in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 17 Apr (Ricky Davis), one continued at that site from 30 Apr (Jim Gould, Jeff Lewis, m. obs.) through 14 May (Audrey Whitlock). This species has become almost annual at Mattamuskeet NWR during the spring in the past five years.

Roseate Spoonbill: A few of the higher counts along the SC coast were seven at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, 8 May (Carroll Richard); 12 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, 14 May (Nicole Cerullo, Nashville Farrell) and 28 May (David Youngblood); and nine at Pleasant Point Plantation, Beaufort Co, 23 May (Buddy Campbell).

Swallow-tailed Kite: Two seen along the Supply BBS route in the Green Swamp near Makatoka, Brunswick Co, NC, 22 May (Ricky Davis) were



Clapper Rail, 21 Apr 2016, Wake Co, NC. Photo by David Howell.

suggestive of breeding in that area. Davis notes that this sighting was his first in almost 40 years of running a BBS route in the Green Swamp area! Over-shooting the species' breeding range were individual migrants over Ocracoke Island, Hyde Co, NC, 10 Apr (Katie Walker) and 19 May (Larry Mays); just west of Morehead City, Carteret Co, NC, 13 Apr (Ed Dombrowski); over Beaufort, Carteret Co, NC, 15 Apr (Josh Summers); along US-264 just east of Lake Landing, Hyde Co, NC, 11 May (Lucas Bobay, Paul Taillie); and in Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 11 May (Michael Gosselin).

Mississippi Kite: Individuals over Brevard, Transylvania Co, NC, 20 Apr (Mike Judd, et al.) and near Weaverville, Buncombe Co, NC, 8 May, a juvenile, photographed (Steve Semanchuk) were unusual for the mountain region in spring. 20+ along Blue Banks Rd in Brunswick Co, NC, 28 May (David Weesner) was a noteworthy concentration.

Broad-winged Hawk: One seen in Pisgah NF in Henderson Co, NC, 24 Mar (Marilyn Westphal) was somewhat early.

Swainson's Hawk: The immature individual seen at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, in late December and early January was seen again at that site 12 Mar (Jeff Lewis) through 17 Mar (Brad Wood).

Black Rail: Individuals were heard calling at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 16 Apr (Pam Ford, et al.) through 17 May (Irvin Pitts); at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 23 Apr (Bruce Young) and 9 May (Sherry Lane, Greg Massey, et al.); along NC-12 at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, NC, 15 May

(John Fussell, Steve Howell); and at Pains Creek in Dare Co, NC, 17 May (Lucas Bobay).

Clapper Rail: One that survived a window collision in downtown Raleigh, Wake Co, NC, 21 Apr (David Howell) was unusual for a site so far from the coast.

King Rail: Individuals in the northeastern arm of Harris Lake, Wake Co, NC, 23 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly) and in the Cub Creek arm of Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 7 May (Ginger Travis, et al.) were good finds for sites in the Piedmont region.

Virginia Rail: After one was found in the marsh at The Park at Flat Rock, Henderson Co, NC, 24 Mar (Steve Semanchuk), two were seen or heard there 31 Mar (Bill Rhodes) through 16 Apr (Jay Wherley), with at least one remaining through 10 May (m. obs.). Considering how long these birds lingered at this site, is it possible they were attempting to breed there? One at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 16 Apr (Tom Austin, et al.) through 23 Apr (Kevin Kubach) was a good find.

Sora: Nine in the northeastern arm of Harris Lake, Wake Co, NC, 23 Apr (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly) was an impressive count for the Piedmont region, while 45 at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Apr (Jack Rogers, et al.) was an impressive count for any site.

Common Gallinule: Individuals at a small pond in southern Durham Co, NC, 7 May (Bob Chase); at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, 21-23 May (David Disher, m. obs.); and Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 23 May (Michael Robertson) were great finds for the Piedmont region. Nesting was confirmed at the "Old Gravel Quarry" (restricted access) in Dyers Hill, Marlboro Co, SC, when seven juveniles were seen with adults, 23 May (Mac Williams).

Sandhill Crane: 13 continued from February in a field along NC-481 west of Enfield, Halifax Co, 6 Mar (Ricky Davis). Other spring sightings included one at Beaverdam Creek WMA, Anderson Co, SC, 3 Apr (Gerald Vander Mey); two in flight over Fripp Island, Beaufort Co, SC, 6 Apr (Jessica Miller, et al.); three on Rat Island, Charleston Co, SC, 20 Apr (Chris Snook); one in Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 29 Apr (Michael Gosselin) and in nearby Nags Head later that day (Fred Rimmel); one in northeastern New Hanover Co, NC, 5 May (Bruce Jones); two in flight over Wilson Co, NC, 9 May (Steve Howell); and two flying north over multiple sites along the Outer Banks, Dare Co, NC, 24 May (William Benish, Linda Ward, Ed Corey, m. obs.).

Black-necked Stilt: One at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 14 Mar (Mark Vukovich) was a little early.

American Avocet: 508 counted during a shorebird survey on South Island at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 9 Apr (Jamie Dozier) was a remarkable count.

American Golden-Plover: Individuals were seen at the Super Sod farm



Common Gallinule, 21 May 2016, Forsyth Co, NC. Photo by David Disher.

along Hooper Lane, Henderson Co, NC, 13-15 (Wayne Forsythe, m. obs.); at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 10 Apr (Matt Johnson); at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 19 Mar (Jamie Dozier) and 23 Apr (Jack Rogers, et al.); at Ophelia Inlet, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Mar (Susan Campbell, Jeff Pippen); at Shallotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 7 May (Sam Cooper); on Morris Island, Charleston Co, SC, 8 May (Rogers); at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 9 May (John Fussell) and 12 May (Steve Howell); on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 11 May (Chris Snook); at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 15 May (Pippen); and at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 21 May (Cooper).

Semipalmated Plover: 21 at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, after the passage of heavy storms the previous night, 21 May (David Disher, et al.) was a noteworthy count for the Piedmont region.

Solitary Sandpiper: 52 at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, 7 May (Nathan Gatto) was a remarkable concentration of migrants.

Willet: One on Roanoke Rapids Lake, border of Halifax Co and Northampton Co, NC, 24 Apr (Ricky Davis) was a good find for that inland site. 15 video-recorded on the French Broad River in Hot Springs, Madison Co, NC, at approximately 1400 feet above sea level, 28 Apr (Peter Dixon) were extremely unusual for that high elevation. A tight flock of 102 eastern-race Willets on the beach at Ft Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 18 Apr (John Fussell) was considered an unusual concentration.

Lesser Yellowlegs: 850 seen during a shorebird survey at Yawkey Wildlife



American Golden Plover, 07 May 2016, Brunswick Co, NC. Photo by Sam Cooper.

Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 9 Apr (Jamie Dozier) was a noteworthy count.

Upland Sandpiper: This species is much rarer during the spring migration than fall in the Carolinas. Thus of note were individuals at Oakland Plantation Turf Farm, Bladen Co, NC, 11 Apr (Jamie Adams); along Sidbury Rd in New Hanover Co, NC, 13 Apr (Adams); at Dobbins Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 23 Apr (Tom Austin); at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Apr (Jack Rogers, et al.); and at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 24 Apr (John Fussell, et al.).

Whimbrel: One photographed at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, after the passage of heavy storms the previous night, 21 May (David Disher, et al.) was a fantastic find for the Piedmont and a first for that county. Some noteworthy counts from sites along the coast were 1680, a truly remarkable count, at Hunting Island SP, Beaufort Co, SC, 19 Apr (Gerard Cyr); 285 at Edisto Beach SP, Charleston Co, SC, 20 Apr (Cyr); 120 on Rat Island, Charleston Co, SC, 5 May (Chris Snook); 134 at Shallotte Inlet, Brunswick Co, NC, 7 May (Sam Cooper); 140 on Sullivans Island, Charleston Co, SC, 9 May (Craig Watson); and 123 at Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 9 May (John Fussell).

Long-billed Curlew: In Charleston Co, SC, four were seen around Capers Island, 21 Apr (Elizabeth Anderegg, et al.) and two were seen on Bulls Island,



Whimbrel, 21 May 2016, Forsyth Co, NC. Photo by David Disher.

26 Apr (David McLean, et al.).

Bar-tailed Godwit: Already accepted by the NC BRC, NC's fourth Bar-tailed Godwit was photographed on the beach in Frisco, Dare Co, NC, 8 Apr (Chelsea Weithman).

Red Knot: 3500 on the beach of Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 28 Apr (Aaron Given) was an amazing count.

Ruff: Always notable at any site or time of year, a female Ruff, or "Reeve", was seen and photographed in an impoundment in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 7-9 May (Mike McCloy, m. obs.).

Sanderling: Four on a mudflat in the Horsepen Creek arm of Lake Brandt, Guilford Co, NC, 1 May (Nate Swick, Matt Wangerin) were good finds for that inland site.

Dunlin: Inland, individuals were seen at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, 3 Apr (Royce Hough); at Lake Crabtree, Wake Co, NC, 17 Apr (Thierry Besançon); at Bells Grove Lake, Mecklenburg Co, NC, 21 Apr (Taylor Piephoff); and at Dobbins Farm, Anderson Co, SC, 6 May (Scott Davis, Matt Johnson).

Least Sandpiper: 1821 counted during a shorebird survey at Yawkey Wildlife Center, Georgetown Co, SC, 16 Apr (Jamie Dozier) was an impressive count.

White-rumped Sandpiper: Inland sightings included two at Archie



Bar-tailed Godwit, 8 Apr 2016, Dare Co, NC. Photo by Chelsea Weithman.

Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, 9 May (John Haire, m. obs.); one at the WTP in Goldsboro, Wayne Co, NC, 12 May (Sam Cooper); and seven near the dam on the Oconaluftee River in Ela, Swain Co, NC, at about 1800 feet above sea level, 20 May (Kirk Gardner). NC's and SC's respective high counts were 19 in the Lake Landing impoundments of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, 7 May (Mike McCloy) and 14 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, 17 May (Irvin Pitts).

Semipalmated Sandpiper: Very high lunar tides around 9-10 May concentrated this species and other shorebirds on exposed areas along the coast—3000 at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 9 May (Sherry Lane); 1250 at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Carteret Co, NC, 9 May (John Fussell); and 1694 on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 10 May (David Gardner, et al.).

Short-billed Dowitcher: 2967 on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, during a shorebird survey, 11 Apr (David Gardner, et al.) was an impressive count.

Wilson's Phalarope: Two were found this spring—individual adult females at Yawkey Wildlife Center (restricted access), Georgetown Co, SC, 23 Apr (Jack Rogers, et al.) and in an impoundment in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 4 May (John Fussell, et al.) through 7 May (Ashley Merritt).

Red-necked Phalarope: An adult female in an impoundment in the Lake Landing portion of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 1 May (Ricky Davis,



Black Tern, 21 May 2016, Cabarrus Co, NC. Photo by Phil Fowler.

m. obs.) was a one-day wonder and a great find for that inland site.

South Polar Skua: Skuas were seen on four of 18 spring pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, in late May and early June, with one seen 29 May; one seen 30 May; two seen 31 May; and one seen 2 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Pomarine Jaeger: A dark-morph individual off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 29 May (Lucas Bobay, Paul Taillie) was a noteworthy from-shore sighting.

Parasitic Jaeger: From-shore sightings included one off Oceanana Pier, Carteret Co, NC, 23 Mar and 17 Apr (John Fussell, et al.); one off Jeannette's Pier, Dare Co, NC, 3 Apr (Ricky Davis); one at Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 10 Apr (Sam Cooper); two off Seaview Pier, Onslow Co, NC, 30 Apr (Fussell); one off Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 20 May (Lucas Bobay); seven off Atlantic Beach, Carteret Co, NC, 29 May (Fussell, et al.); and two off Cape Point, 29-30 May (Bobay). The latter two sightings occurred during the passage of TS Bonnie.

Dovekie: One seen in flight off Johnnie Mercer's Pier, New Hanover Co, NC, 6 Mar (Andrew Thornton, Marty Wall) was a great find, as there had been very few sightings of this small alcid this winter.

Bonaparte's Gull: One, still in first-winter plumage, seen at Oyster Bay Golf Links in Sunset Beach, Brunswick Co, NC, 21 May (Ricky Davis) was somewhat late to depart.

Black-headed Gull: One photographed at Oregon Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 1 Mar (Greg Perry) was the spring's only sighting.

Laughing Gull: Father inland than typical for the species were individuals

at Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 29 Mar (John Haire) and 17 May (Nathan & Sarah Gatto); and over Lake Jocassee, Oconee Co, SC, 15 May (Caroline Eastman, Irvin Pitts, et al.).

Gull-billed Tern: 21 in the Lake Landing impoundments of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 14 May (Jeff Lewis, Audrey Whitlock) was a good count away from the ocean.

Caspian Tern: 32 at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 17 Apr (Matt Spangler) was a noteworthy count for that inland site.

Black Tern: Two photographed at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 28 Apr (Michael Gosselin) were slightly early. One was seen in the Lake Landing section of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, for an unusually extensive period, 1 May (Ricky Davis) through 24 May (m. obs.). One photographed in the wetland at Concord Mills, Cabarrus Co, NC, 21 May (Jan & Phil Fowler, et al.) was a good find for a site in the Piedmont during the spring.

Arctic Tern: Individuals were seen on pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 20 May, 22 May, and 23 May (Brian Patteson, et al.).

White-winged Dove: Spring sightings included one on Sullivan's Island, Charleston Co, SC, 23 Mar (Pam Ford, Craig Watson); two in Hampstead, Pender Co, NC, 30 Mar (Paulette Biles); one in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 5 Apr (Jeff Lewis); one at the Clemson Aquaculture Facility, Pickens Co, SC, 10 Apr (Tom Austin); two at a feeder in Waves, Dare Co, NC, 13-15 May (Karen Lebing); one at a feeder in North Myrtle Beach, Horry Co, SC, 16 May (Deb Winter); and one at Lake Conestee Nature Park, Greenville Co, SC, 30 May (Valerie Hollinger).

Yellow-billed Cuckoo: One at Palmetto Fort Park, Charleston Co, SC, 28 Mar (Craig Watson) was slightly early. 24 on the Montague BBS route in Pender Co, NC, 28 May (Sam Cooper) was a high count for that route.

Black-billed Cuckoo: One seen at a farm in Moore Co, NC, 8 May (Ian Ruppenthal) was a possible first for that county.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Five heard along the Blue Ridge Parkway near Devil's Courthouse in southern Haywood Co, NC, 11 May (Marilyn Westphal) was a nice count.

Common Nighthawk: One seen over a marsh on Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, SC, 2 Apr (Mayn Hipp, et al.) was somewhat early to arrive.

Buff-bellied Hummingbird: The individual that wintered in a neighborhood in Winston-Salem, Forsyth Co, NC, was last seen 6 Mar (Cheri Seli).

Olive-sided Flycatcher: Individuals were seen at Yates Mill County Park, Wake Co, NC, 15 May (Phil Doerr); in Hillsborough, Orange Co, NC, 18 May (David Anderson, et al.) through 20 May (m. obs.); and near the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 22 May (Alan MacEachren) through 23 May (m. obs.).

Gray Kingbird: One was seen near Hatteras Inlet, Dare Co, NC, 1 May



Scissor-tailed Flycatchers, 17 Jun 2016, Greenville Co, SC. Photo by Yves Limpalair.

(Michael Gosselin).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: A female returned to the traditional nesting site along Gunter Rd in Greenville Co, SC, by 23 May (*fide* Paul Serridge).

Warbling Vireo: One seen and heard singing along the Tar River in Nash Co, NC, 9 May (Ricky Davis) was unusual for the coastal plain.

Sedge Wren: Six singing wrens in former agricultural fields at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 24 Apr (John Fussell, et al.) was a good count.

Blue-gray Gnatcatcher: 19 in the western Croatan NF, near the border of Carteret Co and Jones Co, NC, 13 Mar (John Fussell, et al.) was a high count for that early date.

Cedar Waxwing: A total of 64 at four different sites in Brunswick Co, NC, 22 May (Ricky Davis) was an amazing tally for late May.

Snow Bunting: An adult male photographed on the beach just west of Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 1 May (Michael Gosselin) was quite late. Of interest, the bird was in alternate (breeding) plumage, a plumage rarely seen in the Carolinas.

Louisiana Waterthrush: Singing individuals along the Northwest Prong of the Newport River in the Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 19 Apr (John Fussell) and in the Green Swamp in Brunswick Co, NC, 22 May (Ricky Davis) were unusual so near the coast.

Golden-winged Warbler: Eight along Max Patch Rd in northeastern



Cerulean Warbler, 4 May 2016, Kitty Hawk, Dare Co, NC. Photo by Jim Gould.

Haywood Co, NC, 11 May (Paul Carroll, Kirk Gardner) was a good count.

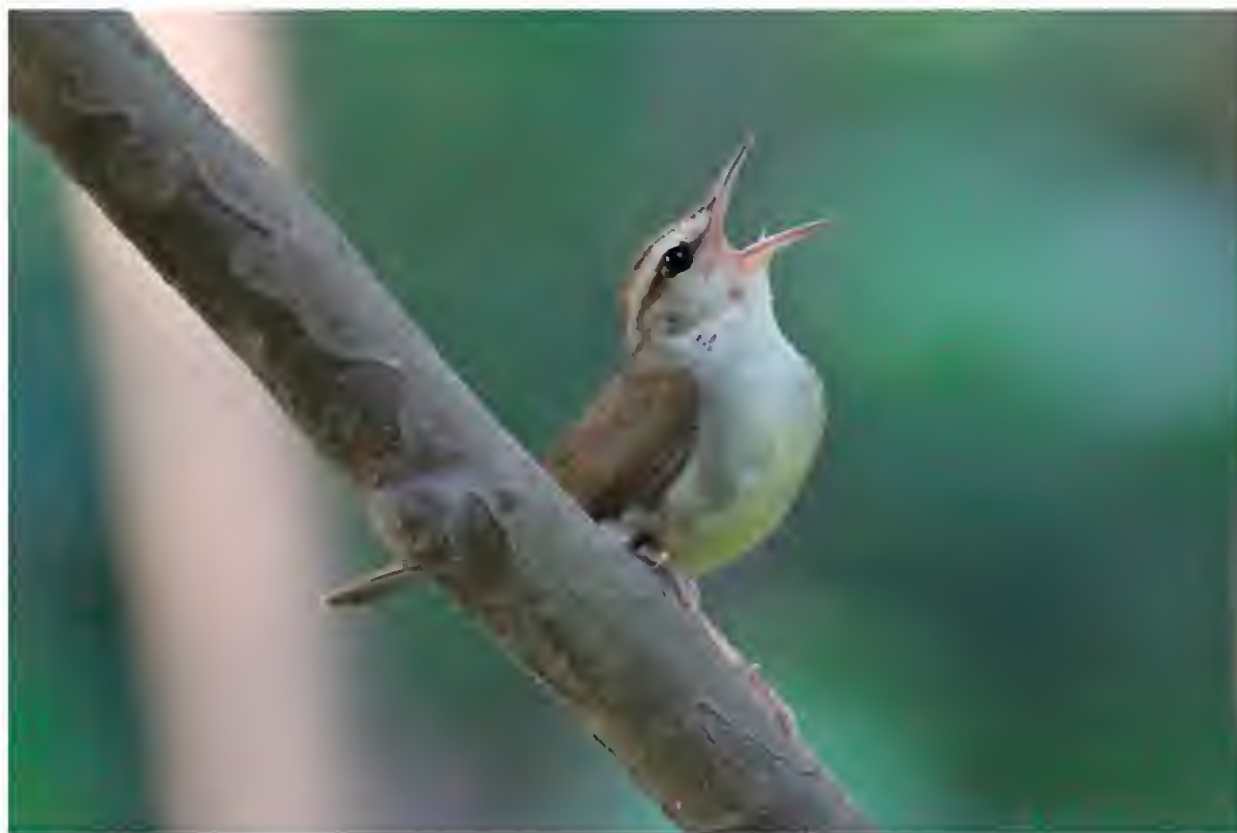
Blue-winged Warbler: One on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 1 May (Jeff Lewis) was unusual for a site so near the coast.

“Lawrence’s Warbler”: A rare backcross hybrid of a Golden-winged Warbler and a Blue-winged Warbler was seen and video-recorded at Bass Lake, Wake Co, NC, 29 Apr (Josh Southern).

Swainson’s Warbler: A few of the higher counts were seven at Congaree National Park, Richland Co, SC, 24 Apr (John Grego); eight singing birds around Little Deep Creek Rd in the Croatan NF, Carteret Co, NC, 29 Apr (John Fussell); and 13 singing birds along 11 miles of biking trails at Howell Woods, Johnston Co, NC, 30 Apr (Eddie Owens). One seen along Indian Creek Trail at Hanging Rock SP, Stokes Co, NC, 11 May (Ron Morris, Laura Phail) was unusual for that area of the state.

Connecticut Warbler: Three were reported this spring, all in the NC mountains—one heard singing in the Hospital Fields in Brevard, Transylvania Co, 26 Apr (Clifton Avery, Chris Kelly, et al.); a female seen near the French Broad River in Mills River, Henderson Co, 14 May (Wayne Forsythe, Ron Selvey); and one seen and heard at Tessentee Bottomland Preserve, Macon Co, 17 May (Samuel Merker, et al.)

Cerulean Warbler: One heard singing along Skyuka Mountain Rd in Polk Co, NC, 23 Apr (Simon Harvey) was suggestive of attempted breeding in that area. One photographed in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 4 May (Michael



Swainson's Warbler, 29 June 2016, Lexington Co, SC. Photo by Irvin Pitts.

Gosselin, Jim Gould) was a great find for a site on the Outer Banks.

Chestnut-sided Warbler: One on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, SC, 5 Apr (David Gardner) was early to arrive.

Yellow-throated Warbler: 83 singing birds in western Croatan NF, near the border of Carteret Co and Jones Co, 19 Mar (John Fussell) was a large number for mid-March.

Black-throated Green Warbler: Two at Santee Delta WMA, Georgetown Co, SC, 12 Mar (Dennis Forsythe) were early.

Wilson's Warbler: Individuals at Price Park, Guilford Co, NC, 4 May (Lou Skrabec, Andrew Thornton); along the Neuse River Greenway, Wake Co, NC, 15 May (Ricky Davis); and at Sandy Creek Park, Durham Co, NC, 22 May (Marty McClelland) were good finds for sites away from the mountains.

Bachman's Sparrow: 17 in the Sandhills Game Land in Richmond Co, NC, 26 May (Susan Campbell) was a noteworthy count.

Lark Sparrow: The individual seen around the NC Coastal Federation building in Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, NC, during the winter, continued until 2 Apr (Sam Cooper). One photographed in Hendersonville, Henderson Co, NC, 12 Apr (Luke Cannon, Tina Collins) was very unusual for the mountain region. In the Sandhills region, an area where breeding has been documented, sightings included three on Fort Bragg (restricted access) in Hoke Co, NC, 24 Apr (Rex Badgett, et al.); two singing on territory on Fort Bragg in Cumberland Co, NC, 24 Apr (Badgett); a singing male photographed



Henslow's Sparrow, 28 March 2016, Pickens Co, SC. Photo by Tom Austin.

at Carolina Sandhills NWR, Chesterfield Co, SC, 5 May (Irvin Pitts); and one photographed at Camp Mackall, Scotland Co, NC, 10 May (Alicia Jackson).

Savannah Sparrow: One photographed at Stecoah Gap, Graham Co, NC, at about 3200 feet above sea level, 10 May (Chris Kelly) was a possible first for that county.

Henslow's Sparrow: One photographed at the Clemson Aquaculture Center, Pickens Co, SC, 28 Mar (Tom Austin) was a great find for the western part of the state.

Nelson's Sparrow: Two in the marsh next to Federal Point at Ft Fisher, New Hanover Co, NC, 27 May (Dave Weesner) were somewhat late to depart.

Lincoln's Sparrow: Individuals were seen and photographed at Carvers Creek SP, Cumberland Co, NC, 12-16 Mar (Mike Stewart); around Creech Pond in York Co, SC, 24 Apr (Kevin Metcalf, et al.); and eating millet in a yard in Mecklenburg Co, NC, 25 Apr (Molly Redmond, Barry Rowan).

Western Tanager: A male was photographed at a feeder in Anderson Co, SC, 2 May (Greg Padget), later in the season than typical for sightings of this species in our region.

Painted Bunting: A female at a millet feeder in Southern Shores, Dare Co, NC, 11-14 Mar (Jim Gould) was unusual for a site so far north.

Dickcissel: Spring sightings included two, a female and a male, along

Brent Haigler Rd in Union Co, NC, 10 May (Steven Fasciana) into late May (m. obs.); an adult male singing along Baldwin Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 21-25 May (Marty Wall, m. obs.); two, a female and a male, along Robbs School Rd in Cherokee Co, SC, 22 May (J.B. Hines); and a singing male along Mayo Farm Rd in Martin Co, NC, 30 May (Merrill Lynch).

Bobolink: As many as 20 Bobolinks were seen at a known breeding site along Bamboo Rd in Watauga Co, NC, in late April and May (m. obs.).

Yellow-headed Blackbird: An adult male photographed along Scuffletown Rd in Greenville Co, SC, 7 Apr (Jennifer Kindel) was the only one reported this spring.

Rusty Blackbird: Two at Cape Lookout, Carteret Co, NC, 10 Apr (Jack Fennell, John Fussell, Steve Howell) were unusual for a barrier island in spring.

Brewer's Blackbird: 17 at Dobbins Farm in Anderson Co, SC, 14 Mar (Craig Watson) was a good count.

Pine Siskin: 500 around the feeders at Snowbird Mountain Lodge in Graham Co, NC, 24 Apr (Simon Thompson) was a noteworthy concentration. Siskins lingered at feeders at multiple sites in the Piedmont region until about mid-May (m. obs.).

Fifty Years Ago in *The Chat*—June 1966

Paul Sykes contributed an article titled “Evidence of the Eastward Expansion of the Breeding Range of the Song Sparrow into the Eastern Piedmont of North Carolina”. In it, Sykes provided a map of breeding locations in the Piedmont showing the movement of the species from the western Piedmont in 1933, to the first nest found in Wake County in the eastern Piedmont, on May 13, 1965. He provided full details of the latter nest attempt along with a photograph.

T.A. Beckett III of Charleston submitted a letter warning of the decline of the Brown Pelican population in South Carolina. He asked birders to help support efforts to determine the cause of this steep population decline and discussed the need for federal protection of both the Brown Pelican and the Osprey. Both of these fish-eating species had begun to disappear in many southeastern states. Within a decade of the publication of Beckett’s letter, both species were placed on the new federal list of endangered species, the build up of DDT in the food chain was determined as the primary cause for the population crash, and conservation efforts were being made to aid in these birds’ recovery.

Notices of the deaths of two prominent birders were also published in this issue. Ivan R. Tompkins was one of the south’s leading naturalists, ornithologists, and wildlife photographers. He lived in Savannah and spent a lifetime birding and watching wildlife in South Carolina and Georgia. He contributed many articles and essays to state and national publications. Tompkins “was well-versed in a number of fields - in identification, distribution, taxonomy, and behavior. His was a keen, an analytical mind. To him “what” and “where” were of interest, but “how” and “why” were more important”.

B. Rhett Chamberlain was an engineer by trade who spent his free time studying birds and other aspects of nature. He published many articles about birds in the Carolinas. He was the brother of South Carolina ornithologist E. Burnham Chamberlain. Rhett Chamberlain played many roles supporting ornithological work in both Carolinas. As a boy he prepared study skins for Arthur T. Wayne at the Charleston Museum of Natural History. As an adult he helped start Spring Bird Counts in the Carolinas and was the compiler of the counts and the editor of the General Field Notes section of *The Chat* for many years. He also worked with his brother to found the Carolina Bird Club from existing groups in both North and South Carolina.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

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The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

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The Chat

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612



Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

Periodicals Postage Paid
at Pinehurst, NC 28374 and
additional mailing offices

The Chat

Vol. 80

FALL 2016

No. 4



The Quarterly Bulletin of the Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
The Ornithological Society of the Carolinas

THE CHAT

ISSN No. 0009-1987

Vol. 80

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THE CHAT is published quarterly by the Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612. Individual subscription price \$25 per year. Periodicals postage paid at Pinehurst, NC and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to THE CHAT, Carolina Bird Club, Inc., 9 Quincy Place, Pinehurst NC 28374.

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2016 Spring Bird Counts in South Carolina

Steven J. Wagner

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Seven spring migration counts were conducted in South Carolina from April 24 to May 21. The 145 participants reported 216 species, down from last year's high count of 223. Overall there were 27 species of warblers reported, down from the count high of 30 reported last year. Our species counts for waterfowl (9) and shorebirds (22) were also down from last year's numbers (17 and 25, respectively).

Additional highlights for each of the counts are provided by the count compilers below.

Compilers' Comments

Greenville County: May 7 (*one area covered on May 8*), 133 species, 4069 individuals

Coordinator: Paul Serridge
4 Audrey Lane
Greenville, SC 29615

Participants: Derek Aldrich, John Asaro, Joan Baker, Jim Buschur, Marion Clark, Steve Compton, Don Cox, Steve Cox, Denise Dupon, Don Faulkner, Chip Gilbert, Gene Hall, Joyce Hall, Gary Harbour, Genny Hill, J.B. Hines, Rob Hunnings, Jerry Johnson, David Kirk, Jane Kramer, Kevin Kubach, Tim Lee, Yves Limpalair, Chris Peak, Merikay Pirrone, Michael Robertson, Charlie Rucinski, Barbara Serridge, Paul Serridge, Allison Stoiser, Judith Webb, Susan Zickos

Thirty-two participants birded 18 areas in Greenville County. Seventeen areas were covered on May 7; the count at the Furman University campus was postponed until May 8 because of a conflict with campus-wide activities that day. The weather on both days was ideal for birding with lows in the mid-40s and highs around 80F, partly cloudy, and very light winds.

Mississippi Kite and Alder Flycatcher were firsts for the Spring Migration count. Hooded Merganser, Olive-sided Flycatcher, and Gray-cheeked Thrush were only the second reports of these species on any Greenville County Spring count.

Twenty-five warbler species were reported, contributing to a total of 133 species, just 1 lower than the record set in 2015. Records since 2005 show a

total of 176 species reported during the Spring Migration Counts in Greenville County.

Spartanburg County: May 14, 109 species, 4464 individuals

Coordinator: Lyle Campbell
126 Greengate Lane
Spartanburg, SC 29307

Participants: Doug Allen, Carol Anderson, Tom Broome, Tim Brown, Dan Bryant, David Campbell, Lyle Campbell, Sarah Campbell, Timothy Campbell, Dan Codispoti, Ed Elam, Kathleen Elam, J. B. Hines, Jack Jennings, Rebecca Jones, Jeanette Keepers, Don Knight, Mary Knight, Joe Mitchell, Roberta Mitchell, Nora Moore, Mary Ann Myers, William Myers, Robert Powell, Doug Rayner, Mack Shealey, Kim Shorter, Kristen Taylor, Gerald Thurmond, Oliver Whitaker, Terri Whitaker, Earl Wilson, Lanita Wilson, Peggy Yo

The Spartanburg 2016 Spring Count found a low count of 109 species. Our warbler count was 15 species. Best birds were a Mississippi Kite and a pair of Red-breasted Mergansers. Whip-poor-wills and Chuck-wills Widows were hard to come by. We had a reduced number of counters, field and feeder, but welcomed four first-time participants.

Cherokee County: May 21, 78 species, 1280 individuals

Coordinator: Lyle Campbell
126 Greengate Lane
Spartanburg, SC 29307

Participants: David Campbell, Lyle Campbell, Sarah Campbell, Timothy Campbell, Claude Cobb, Kaitlin Finnan, J. B. Hines, Teresa Liebfreid, Patricia Morgan

The Cherokee 2016 Spring Count was low on participants, but still found 78 species. Our warbler count was 7 species. Best birds were the pair of Dickcissel found by J. B. Hines.

Aiken County: May 7, 107 species, 2874 individuals

Coordinator: Anne Waters
1621 Apple Valley Drive
Augusta, GA 30906

Participants: Bill Boeringer, John Demko, Carol Eldridge, Larry Eldridge, Carl Huffman, Wade Gassman, Judy Gregory, Alaina Keener, James Keener, Joyce Keener, Paul Koehler, Matt Malin, Willie Malpass, George Reeves, Lois

Stacey, Peter Stangel, John Steele, Kathy Steele, Mark Vukovich, Carolyn White, Larry White, Calvin Zippler

Congaree National Park: May 1, 71 species, 634 individuals

Coordinator: John Grego

Participants: Caroline Eastman, John Grego, Jerry Griggs, Miriam Oudejans, Warren Steckle and 15 other Robin Carter Dawn Chorus Walk attendees

A Spring Migration Count was held May 1 at Congaree National Park. Weather was 70 degrees in the morning and 82 degrees in the afternoon, with scattered rainshowers in the morning and persistent heavy rain in the afternoon. Jerry Griggs led a group of 19 participants on the Robin Carter Dawn Chorus Walk in the morning, while another group covered the Bluff Trail later in the morning, and a third group covered the eastern end of the park through the afternoon. Persistent heavy rains in the afternoon prevented visits to productive territory. A total of 71 species were seen, and migrant numbers were low.

Charleston/Berkeley Counties: April 24, 167 species, 10,473 individuals

Coordinator: Andy Harrison

35 Cross Creek Drive, Apt P-7
Charleston, SC 29412

Participants: Ed Blich, George Cromartie, Judy Fairchild, Reggie Fairchild, Ted Fairchild, Pam Ford, Dennis Forsythe, Donna Forsythe, Selimah Harmon, Andy Harrison, E. Starr Hazard III, Don Jones, Lois Jones, Pete Laurie, Patrick Markham, Mary-Catherine Martin, Keith McCullough, David C. McLean Jr., Jill Midgett, Whitnie Miles, Cathy Miller, Steve Moore, Paul Nolan, Perry Nugent, Bradford Peck, Felicia Sanders, Roger Smith, Chris Snook, Ray Swagerty, Joel Thompson, Ann Truesdale, Jennifer Tyrrell, Monty Wallace, Craig Watson, Lori Sheridan Wilson, Bill Woolsey, and Kathy Woolsey

The 2016 Charleston Spring Bird Count was held on April 24, 2016 with 37 participants divided into 20 parties, who tallied 95.98 hours in the field. We observed 167 total species and 10,473 individuals (for a bird/party hour average of 109.1).

We enjoyed pleasant weather on the day of the count, with clear to partly cloudy skies and no precipitation. Temperatures ranged from a pre-dawn low of about 57 degrees F to an afternoon high of about 77 F. The species and individual totals both exceeded the 10-year averages of 151 and 9471, respectively. We fielded parties in 11 areas this year (Fairlawn Plantation and the Intracoastal Waterway were not covered). This year's count was

held one week earlier than our usual date of the first Sunday in May, and that probably contributed to the number of lingering winter species we recorded.

In addition to continuing Black Scoters and other ducks, we also observed the following species: 1 Red-throated Loon, 5 Common Loons, 2 Horned Grebes, 6 Northern Gannets, 1 Lesser Black-backed Gull, 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, 1 Hermit Thrush, 1 Blue-headed Vireo and 22 Yellow-rumped Warblers. The Lesser Black-backed Gull (observed on Dewees Island by Keith McCullough), Ruby-crowned Kinglet (observed by Kathy and Bill Woolsey in Laurel Hill), and Hermit Thrush (observed by Craig Watson and Pam Ford in Porcher's Bluff) were all new to the count since I took over as compiler in 2006. A Blackburnian Warbler reported on Dewees Island was similarly new to the count. As in 2015, we generally did well with shorebirds, seabirds and wading birds this year. For example, among shorebirds we recorded 104 Lesser Yellowlegs (10-year average 52), 140 Willets (87), 153 Spotted Sandpipers (80), 240 Semipalmated Sandpipers (73.5), 65 Western Sandpipers (32.2), and 644 Dunlin (403). Among seabirds we recorded 46 Herring Gulls (11.8) and 80 Least Terns (38.5). However, numbers were a bit down for some species, notably 23 American Oystercatchers (83.6), 16 Ruddy Turnstones (57.8), 37 Sanderlings (78.9), 4 Gull-billed Terns (22.4), 92 Royal Terns (237), and 9 Sandwich Terns (64.7). Although we fielded parties in all of the island areas, our lack of an Intracoastal Waterway party undoubtedly resulted in lower individual totals for some of these species. Among songbirds we recorded 16 warbler species, none in exceptionally high numbers except for the 22 Yellow-rumped Warblers (5.7). Single observations of Kentucky Warbler (5.7) and Yellow-breasted Chat (9.1) were low counts for these species. The 2 Chimney Swifts (14.7), 3 Acadian Flycatchers (9.2) and 20 Red-eyed Vireos (60.8) we recorded were also quite low, and we did not observe a single Indigo Bunting (21.2). On the other hand, thanks to our early morning birding parties we recorded 35 Chuck-will's-widows (11.8). According to anecdotal reports, Orchard Oriole numbers seem relatively high this spring, and on the count we observed 42 (21.3).

Some of the area highlights on this year's count included:

In the North Bulls area, Mary-Catherine Martin, Felicia Sanders and Jill Midgett observed 2 Horned Grebes, 1 Reddish Egret (Felicia Sanders provided good supporting details for this bird, a species that regularly visits Bulls Island but is rarely reported on the count), 5 Glossy Ibis, 6 Mottled Ducks, 3 Blue-winged Teal, 1 Red-breasted Merganser, 9 Wilson's Plovers, 2 Black-necked Stilts, 239 Semipalmated Sandpipers, 574 Dunlin, 4 Gull-billed Terns, and 2 Common Terns.

David McLean and his party in the South Bulls area (Starr Hazard and Selimah Harmon) reported 6 Northern Gannets, 8 Least Bitterns, 100 Black Scoters (details provided by David McLean), 1 Northern Harrier, 1

American Kestrel, 44 Spotted Sandpipers, 1 Bonaparte's Gull, and 15 Painted Buntings.

Because of family commitments, Hal Currey and his usual party could not cover Capers Island this year. Monty Wallace (who normally covers the Intracoastal Waterway) agreed to fill in for Hal, and he and his party (Paul Nolan, Steve Moore and Whitnie Miles) observed 110 Red Knots, 28 Herring Gulls, 1 Great Black-backed Gull, 360 Black Skimmers, and 1 White-throated Sparrow.

In the Laurel Hill area, Kathy Woolsey and Bill Woolsey observed 1 Wood Stork, 2 Mallards, 1 Ruby-crowned Kinglet, and 48 Cedar Waxwings.

In Cainhoy, Andy Harrison and his party (George Cromartie and Brad Peck) reported 4 Rock Pigeons, 2 Chimney Swifts, 4 Red-headed Woodpeckers, 7 Red-cockaded Woodpeckers, 1 Northern Flicker, 1 Eastern Wood-Pewee, 2 Worm-eating Warblers, 1 Yellow-breasted Chat, and 3 Bachman's Sparrows.

Jen Tyrrell and Ann Truesdale covered the Sewee Road area, and they reported 3 Pied-billed Grebes, 9 Wild Turkeys, 1 Swallow-tailed Kite, 1 Mississippi Kite, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 1 Eastern Wood-Pewee, and 1 Savannah Sparrow. In pre-dawn owling, Dennis Forsythe added 3 Eastern Screech-Owls, 1 Great-Horned Owl, 2 Barred Owls, and 23 Chuck-will's-widows (and augmented the totals for various other species).

In Ion Swamp, Perry Nugent and his party (Ed Blich, Ray Swagerty and Joel Thompson) started owling well before dawn and birded until late afternoon. They observed 3 Swallow-tailed Kites, 2 Mississippi Kites, 1 Cooper's Hawk, 12 Barred Owls, 10 Chuck-will's-widows, 2 Acadian Flycatchers, 1 American Robin, 1 Yellow-throated Vireo, 6 Prairie Warblers, 16 Prothonotary Warblers, 2 Ovenbirds, 1 Northern Waterthrush, 1 Kentucky Warbler, and 25 Hooded Warblers.

Craig Watson and Pam Ford had a very good day in the Porcher's Bluff area. They focused their efforts on Sewee Preserve and observed 3 Red-breasted Mergansers, 1 Sharp-shinned Hawk, 1 Broad-winged Hawk, 1 Wild Turkey, 7 Solitary Sandpipers, 63 Willets, 63 Whimbrels, 112 Short-billed Dowitchers, 4 Northern Rough-winged Swallows, 1 White-breasted Nuthatch, 7 Marsh Wrens, 1 Hermit Thrush, 3 Wood Thrushes, 1 American Robin, 15 Yellow-rumped Warblers, 2 Worm-eating Warblers, 3 Chipping Sparrows, 3 White-throated Sparrows, 3 Bobolinks, and 2 American Goldfinches. Dennis Forsythe birded in the morning at the Copahee Sound Landing for two brief periods (at different tide times), and he added three species (3 Clapper Rails, 1 Royal Tern, and 1 Blue Grosbeak) to the area list and augmented the individual totals for a number of other species.

In the Guerin's Bridge Road area, Don Jones and his party (Lois Jones and Patrick Markham) reported 10 Cattle Egrets, 2 Wood Storks, 1 Hooded Merganser, 5 Bald Eagles, 3 Belted Kingfishers, and 24 Tree Swallows.

Cathy Miller and her group (Judy Fairchild, Reggie Fairchild, Ted Fairchild, Pete Laurie, Lori Sheridan Wilson, Chris Snook, Keith McCullough and Roger Smith) had another excellent day on Dewees Island,

finishing with 104 species! They reported 1 Red-throated Loon, 1 Least Bittern, 1 Glossy Ibis, 2 Roseate Spoonbills, 6 Mottled Ducks, 9 Blue-winged Teal, 4 Bald Eagles, 1 Sora, 58 Black-bellied Plovers, 859 Semipalmated Plovers, 4 Piping Plovers, 3 Black-necked Stilts, 10 Ruddy Turnstones, 24 Sanderlings, 108 Short-billed Dowitchers, 1 Bonaparte's Gull, 1 Lesser Black-backed Gull (Keith McCullough provided convincing details for this bird), 9 Sandwich Terns, 2 Common Ground-Doves, 1 Eastern Screech-Owl, 2 Great Horned Owls, 8 Gray Catbirds, 1 Blue-headed Vireo, 1 Black-throated Blue Warbler, 1 Blackburnian Warbler, 3 Black-and-white Warblers, 1 Rose-breasted Grosbeak, 42 Painted Buntings, 1 Chipping Sparrow, 2 Savannah Sparrows, 3 Seaside Sparrows, and 6 House Finches. During pre-dawn owling, Judy and Reggie Fairchild heard 2 Chuck-will's-widows in addition to the Great Horned Owls.

Finally, in the Airport area, Dennis Forsythe and Donna Forsythe observed 2 Mallards, 1 Mississippi Kite, 1 Acadian Flycatcher, and 5 Red-eyed Vireos.

Notable misses this year included: Yellow-crowned Night-Heron, Northern Bobwhite, King Rail, Marbled Godwit, White-rumped Sandpiper, Black Tern, Common Nighthawk, Loggerhead Shrike, Swainson's Warbler, Indigo Bunting, Eastern Meadowlark, and House Sparrow.

I extend sincere thanks to all those who participated on the Spring Count, especially my area leaders, and also to those who contributed to our Birdathon. As always, I enjoyed serving as compiler and look forward to doing it again next year!

Jasper County: May 14, 100 species, 1236 individuals

Coordinator: Steve Wagner
313 E. 54th St.

Savannah, GA 31405

Participants: Sue DeRosa, James Fleullan, Mary Lambright, Joel Ludlam, Rudy Reyes, Robin Runnells, Steve Wagner and 7 participants in an Ogeechee Audubon Field Trip

Fourteen participants in two parties contributed to Jasper County's Spring Migration Count on May 14. James Fleullan led an Ogeechee Audubon group through the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge. Steve Wagner and Joel Ludlam birded north along the Savannah River to Tillman and to the Nimmer sod farm near Ridgeland. Unfortunately, we were unable to cover the dredge spoil disposal area this year. This accounts for our significantly lower species and total individual counts compared to 2015's 143 species and 26,965 individuals.

Table 1. Spring 2016 bird counts in South Carolina

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
Black-bellied Whistling-Duck							6	6
Canada Goose	165	235	61	9		34		504
Wood Duck	38	7		48	3	16	10	122
Mallard	53	68		10		4		135
Mottled Duck						12	21	33
Blue-winged Teal						12	1	13
Black Scoter						100		100
scoter sp.						8		8
Hooded Merganser	1					1		2
Red-breasted Merganser		2				4		6
Northern Bobwhite	15	2	2	8			2	29
Wild Turkey	12	7	14	17	1	10	4	65
Pied-billed Grebe	2					5		7
Horned Grebe						2		2
Rock Pigeon	10	68	33			4		115
Eurasian Collared-Dove	2	4		4				10
Common Ground-Dove						2		2
Mourning Dove	112	182	96	73	10	65	13	551
Yellow-billed Cuckoo	14	16	10	36	12	28	13	129
Common Nighthawk		9					3	12
Chuck-will's-widow	6	4	3	26	1	35	2	77
Eastern Whip-poor-will	3		2					5
Chimney Swift	102	70	18	31	12	2	3	238
Ruby-throated Hummingbird	12	18	1	9	7	11		58
Clapper Rail						26	1	27
King Rail							5	5
Sora						1		1
Purple Gallinule							7	7
Common Gallinule						63	19	82
American Coot						15	4	19
Black-necked Stilt						7	14	21
American Oystercatcher						23		23
Black-bellied Plover						114		114
Wilson's Plover						16		16
Semipalmated Plover						1031		1031
Piping Plover						4		4
Killdeer	13	15	13	3	3	8	19	74
Whimbrel						162	1	163
Ruddy Turnstone						16		16
Red Knot						127		127
Sanderling						37		37
Dunlin						644		644
Least Sandpiper	2					57	19	78
Semipalmated Sandpiper						240		240
Western Sandpiper						65		65
peep sp.							6	6
Short-billed Dowitcher						307		307
dowitcher sp.						282		282
American Woodcock			1					1
Spotted Sandpiper	16	5	1	2		153	3	180
Solitary Sandpiper	15	4		3	4	7	1	34
Greater Yellowlegs						48		48
Willet						140		140
Lesser Yellowlegs	6				1	104	3	114

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
Bonaparte's Gull						2		2
Laughing Gull						887		887
Ring-billed Gull						32		32
Herring Gull						46		46
Lesser Black-backed Gull						1		1
Great Black-backed Gull						1		1
Least Tern						80	3	83
Gull-billed Tern						4	2	6
Caspian Tern						8		8
Common Tern						2		2
Forster's Tern						160		160
Royal Tern						92		92
Sandwich Tern						9		9
Black Skimmer						390		390
Red-throated Loon						1		1
Common Loon	2					5		7
Wood Stork						3	7	10
Northern Gannet						6		6
Double-crested Cormorant	2	7	1	6		203	1	220
Anhinga				19	9	42	5	75
Brown Pelican						73		73
Least Bittern						9	2	11
Great Blue Heron	27	54	3	23	3	31	4	145
Great Egret				9		206	30	245
Snowy Egret						226	12	238
Little Blue Heron				12		71	6	89
Tricolored Heron						75	5	80
Reddish Egret						1		1
Cattle Egret				56		14	10	80
Green Heron	8	7		9	2	61	6	93
Black-crowned Night-Heron						29	3	32
Yellow-crowned Night-Heron				5			4	9
White Ibis						83	303	386
Glossy Ibis						6	2	8
Roseate Spoonbill						2		2
Black Vulture	12	40	10	71	4	56	5	198
Turkey Vulture	78	55	8	77	11	131	26	386
Osprey	1	6	5	2	2	22	3	41
Swallow-tailed Kite				1		4	1	6
Mississippi Kite	1	1		168	8	4	5	187
Bald Eagle				2		16	3	21
Northern Harrier						1		1
Sharp-shinned Hawk	1	3				1		5
Cooper's Hawk	3	1		1	1	2		8
Red-shouldered Hawk	15	25	2	13	7	38	4	104
Broad-winged Hawk	3	3	4			1		11
Red-tailed Hawk	16	16	1	13		10		56
Eastern Screech-Owl		3		3		4		10
Great Horned Owl	1	3		3		3		10
Barred Owl	4	6		9	7	14		40
Belted Kingfisher	6	9		4		7		26
Red-headed Woodpecker	1	19		13	3	7	5	48
Red-bellied Woodpecker	71	42	10	42	13	76	14	268
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker		1		1				2
Downy Woodpecker	26	31	5	5	6	12	2	87
Hairy Woodpecker	3	1			1			5
Red-cockaded Woodpecker				1		7		8

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
Northern Flicker	2	7	1	2		1		13
Pileated Woodpecker	30	10	3	26	19	26	5	119
American Kestrel		1	1	1		1		4
Olive-sided Flycatcher	1							1
Eastern Wood-Pewee	3	9	5	44	8	2	8	79
Acadian Flycatcher	24	11		28	22	3	4	92
Alder Flycatcher	1							1
Eastern Phoebe	39	28	14	4	1			86
Great Crested Flycatcher	31	26	9	70	10	168	14	328
Eastern Kingbird	34	23	14	56	1	38	11	177
Loggerhead Shrike	1						1	2
White-eyed Vireo	26	15	3	70	20	44	18	196
Yellow-throated Vireo	1	4		9	5	1	3	23
Blue-headed Vireo	29	3			1	1		34
Red-eyed Vireo	92	27	17	37	26	20	11	230
Blue Jay	83	119	24	57	7	61	4	355
American Crow	162	219	35	109	9	156	7	697
Fish Crow	11	4	3	4	6	19	3	50
crow sp.				22		6		28
Common Raven	2							2
Purple Martin	41	116	30	7	6	20		220
Tree Swallow	32	9				65		106
Northern Rough-winged Swallow	68	38	3	17	2	7		135
Bank Swallow		8						8
Cliff Swallow	5	538	51	78	57			729
Barn Swallow	80	216	18	11	6	133	27	491
Carolina Chickadee	92	92	14	56	19	108	10	391
Tufted Titmouse	91	90	10	73	17	150	8	439
White-breasted Nuthatch	24	23	1	17	5	1	4	75
Brown-headed Nuthatch	16	13	1	15		74	2	121
House Wren	11	7						18
Marsh Wren						15		15
Carolina Wren	85	110	9	59	17	134	20	434
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher	83	18	5	44	25	69	9	253
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	2			2		1		5
Eastern Bluebird	114	125	54	67		51	9	420
Veery	1	2						3
Gray-cheeked Thrush	1							1
Swainson's Thrush	1							1
Hermit Thrush	1					1		2
Wood Thrush	22	2	2		9	3		38
American Robin	121	81	45	16		2	1	266
Gray Catbird	24	14	2	7	10	13		70
Brown Thrasher	64	45	9	11		14	6	149
Northern Mockingbird	89	182	43	78		53	17	462
European Starling	76	113	94	9		24	3	319
Cedar Waxwing	191	67	125	30		96	29	538
House Sparrow	7	17	5	10				39
House Finch	79	101	8	4		11		203
Purple Finch		6						6
Pine Siskin	3							3
American Goldfinch	95	65	8	8	2	2		180
Ovenbird	23	2			2	2		29
Worm-eating Warbler	16					4		20
Louisiana Waterthrush	8	6	2	2				18
Northern Waterthrush	1					1		2

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
Black-and-white Warbler	14	2		2	2	3		23
Prothonotary Warbler	1	1	2	16	6	26	2	54
Swainson's Warbler	3				2		2	7
Kentucky Warbler		3		2		1	1	7
Common Yellowthroat	37	25	5	20	12	28	15	142
Hooded Warbler	37	4	4	3	4	35	10	97
American Redstart	13	5		13	5		3	39
Cape May Warbler	4			1				5
Northern Parula	29	9	2	87	32	146	26	331
Magnolia Warbler	3			1				4
Blackburnian Warbler						1		1
Yellow Warbler	4			1				5
Chestnut-sided Warbler	7							7
Blackpoll Warbler	6							6
Black-throated Blue Warbler	17	1		2	8	1	1	30
Palm Warbler	1							1
Pine Warbler	17	15	4	84	5	114	14	253
Yellow-rumped Warbler	14	6				22		42
Yellow-throated Warbler	1	2		14	11	37	6	71
Prairie Warbler	5	1		4		15		25
Black-throated Green Warbler	10			1				11
Canada Warbler	2							2
Yellow-breasted Chat	22	13	4	45		1	2	87
Eastern Towhee	63	42	18	43	2	48	7	223
Bachman's Sparrow				3		3	4	10
Chipping Sparrow	66	62	17	15	3	4	4	171
Field Sparrow	25	64	26					115
Savannah Sparrow		6			2	3		11
Grasshopper Sparrow	6	3	3					12
Seaside Sparrow						3		3
Song Sparrow	16	12	2					30
Swamp Sparrow	1							1
White-throated Sparrow	2	5			1	5		13
Dark-eyed Junco	15							15
Summer Tanager	9	12	7	49	20	38	10	145
Scarlet Tanager	9	3	4	2				18
Northern Cardinal	184	229	28	188	34	313	26	1002
Rose-breasted Grosbeak	6			4	1	1	1	13
Blue Grosbeak	11	10	7	21	1	12	2	64
Indigo Bunting	58	27	31	97	18		16	247
Painted Bunting				16		87	6	109
Dickcissel			2					2
Bobolink	50	46				3	60	159
Red-winged Blackbird	69		8	16		322	67	482
Eastern Meadowlark	45	21	28	2				96
Common Grackle	127	120	82	56	17	128	15	545
Boat-tailed Grackle						69	34	103
Brown-headed Cowbird	34	48	24	41	5	32	10	194
Orchard Oriole	6	6		18		42	5	77
Baltimore Oriole	1							1
Species	133	109	78	107	71	167	100	216
Total individuals	4069	4464	1280	2874	634	10473	1236	25029
<u>Regular Count</u>								
Hours foot		36	9	25.15	10.5	59.05	4	

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
Hours car		16.5	6	32.5		22.75	10.3	
Hours boat		5.5				4.83		
Hours canoe/kayak				1				1
Hours bike		1						1
Hours other (golf cart)						5.17		5.17
Miles foot		28.5	5	10.75	8	34.45	2	
Miles car		387.5	150	220.9		165.8	77.5	
Miles boat		12				45.9		57.9
Miles canoe/kayak				0.58				0.58
Miles bike		3						3
Miles other (golf cart)						10.1		10.1
# Regular parties	26	15	5	12		16	2	
# Regular observers	32	19	9	22		39	14	
#Species		106	79	105			99	
#Individuals		3877	1275	2844			1233	
<u>Stationary</u>								
Hours Stationary						1.67		1.67
<u>Feeder Watch</u>								
Hours Feeder Watch		57						57
#Feeder Watchers		23						23
#Feeder Stations		15						15
#Species		52						52
#Individuals		562						562
<u>Nocturnal</u>								
Hours Nocturnal		4	1.5	2	1	2.51	0.5	
Miles Nocturnal		20	2	10		9.5	0.25	
#parties nocturnal		3	2	2		3	1	
#observers nocturnal		6	2	2	17	7	1	
#Species		5	2	4			2	
#Individuals		25	5	30			3	
Time Start		0600	0700	0500	0530	0450	0550	
Time Stop		2200	2200	1900	1600	1830	1618	
<u>Temperature</u>								
Pre-Dawn				44		57	67	
Dawn	45	53	56	48	70	58	67	
AM				64		71	73	
Noon				76		75	80	
PM	80	88	79	81	82	77	84	
Sunset				80		66		
Night				74		63		
<u>Wind</u>								
Pre-Dawn	light			NW4		0-5		
Dawn	light			NW4		5-10	W5	
AM	light			NW6		10-15	W10	
Noon	light			NW7		calm	W14	
PM	light			NW10		5-10	W12	
Sunset	light			W7		5-10		
Night				W5		0-5		

	Gree	Spar	Cher	Aike	Cong	Charl	Jasp	Total
<u>% Clouds</u>								
Pre-Dawn	PC	0	0	0	90	0-15	0	
Dawn	PC	0	0	0	100	0-15	0	
AM	PC	0	0	0	100	0-15	0	
Noon	PC	0	0	0	100	0-15	0	
PM	PC	0	0	0	100	15-33	0	
Sunset	PC			0	100	0-15		
Night				0		0-15		
<u>Precipitation</u>								
Pre-Dawn	0	0		0		0	0	
Dawn	0	0		0	shower	0	0	
AM	0	0		0	shower	0	0	
Noon	0	0		0	heavy	0	0	
PM	0	0		0	heavy	0	0	
Sunset	0	0		0		0	0	
Night								

General Field Notes

General Field Notes briefly report such items as rare sightings, unusual behaviors, significant nesting records, or summaries of such items.

First, second, or third sightings of species in either state must be submitted to the appropriate Bird Records Committee prior to publication in The Chat.

First Specimen of Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) from North Carolina

Gilbert S. Grant

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I found the remains of an adult Little Gull (*Hydrocoloeus minutus*) on North Topsail Beach, Onslow County, North Carolina on 31 March 2014. It consisted of both wings and the sternum. The remainder was heavily scavenged or depredated. It was salvaged as a specimen (intact wing and partial skeleton) at the North Carolina Museum of Natural Sciences (NCSM # 25336). This represents the first specimen from North Carolina.

The Little Gull was first observed in North Carolina in 1971 (Chat 36:22, Chat 36:30). Since then, there has been a significant number of Little Gull reports for North Carolina; however, there were no specimens.

After finding the specimen, I went through the published observations in the Briefs for the Files in *The Chat* and tabulated more than 300 individuals that were sighted between 1970 and 2015. This number is an estimate only because some birds may have been counted twice in slightly different locations along the Outer Banks on the same day or because the observer presented a range of the approximate number of birds seen. There are three recent photos of Little Gull posted in the Carolina Bird Club Photo Gallery: Jeff Lemons, 2014; Jeff Lewis, 2011; and Brian Patteson, 2004. (Carolina Bird Club, Web, 2016)

I would like to thank Ryan Bakelaar for transporting the specimen and preparing it for the museum. I also want to thank Brian O'Shea and John Gerwin for their help at the museum and advice on this note.

BRIEFS FOR THE FILES

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(All dates Summer 2016, unless otherwise noted)

Briefs for the Files is a seasonal collection of uncommon-to-rare or unusual North and South Carolina bird sightings and events which do not necessarily require a more detailed Field Note or article. Reports of your sightings are due the 20th of the month after the end of the previous season.

Winter	December 1 - February 28	due March 20
Spring	March 1 - May 31	due June 20
Summer	June 1 - July 31	due August 20
Fall	August 1 - November 30	due December 20

Reports may be submitted in any format, but I prefer that you use email, list multiple sightings in taxonomic order (rather than by date or location), and type your report directly into the body of the email. If your sightings are in a file, please copy-and-paste the text into the body of the email, rather than sending an attachment.

Suitable reports for the Briefs include any sightings you feel are unusual, rare, noteworthy, or just plain interesting to you in any way! It is my responsibility to decide which reports merit inclusion in the Briefs.

Please be sure to include details of any rare or hard-to-identify birds.

I rely in part on sightings reported in Carolinabirds. Please don't, however, rely on me to pick up your sightings from Carolinabirds. Instead, please also send your sightings directly to me as described above.

If I feel that your sighting warrants a Field Note, I will contact either you or the appropriate state Field Notes editor. You may, of course, submit your Field Note directly to the editor without going through me.

Reports published herein may include sightings that require review by the state bird record's committee. Such reports are not considered accepted records until, and unless, they are so ruled by the committee.

Abbreviations: **BBS** – Breeding Bird Survey, **Co** – County, **et al.** – and others, **m. obs.** – multiple observers, **Mt** – Mount, **NC** – North Carolina, **NWR** – National Wildlife Refuge, **Rd** – Road, **SC** – South Carolina, **SP** – State Park, **WMA** – Wildlife Management Area, **WTP** – Water Treatment Plant

Black-bellied Whistling-Duck: Sightings made in NC included six photographed in Mann's Harbor, Dare Co, NC, 3-4 Jul (Cyndy Holda); two photographed along Hewletts Creek in Wilmington, New Hanover Co, NC, 7 Jul (William McCrea); and one at Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 10-12 Jul (*fide* Susan Campbell). SC's high count for the period was 17, including six juveniles, on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Jul (Jeff Kline, et al.).

Tundra Swan: One, possibly sick or injured, seen and photographed on a pond along US-64 just east of Roper, Washington Co, NC, 24-26 Jun (Sam Cooper) was unusual for the summer period.

American Wigeon: A drake at the Lake Landing impoundments of Mattamuskeet NWR, Hyde Co, NC, 10 Jun (Lucas Bobay) was late to depart.

Blue-winged Teal: A drake summered on a pond at Archie Elledge WTP (limited access), Forsyth Co, NC, from the beginning of the period through 19 Jul (m. obs.).

Redhead: A hen continued from the spring on the pond adjacent to the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, throughout the summer (John Fussell, Marty Wall, et al.). Up to four drakes lingered on North Pond, Pea Island NWR, during the summer (Audrey Whitlock, m. obs.).

Ring-necked Duck: A drake seen on Salem Lake, Forsyth Co, NC, 14 Jun (Allison Gagnon) and 26 Jun (Ken Bennett) may have been the same individual that summered there in previous years.

Black Scoter: Six off the beach in Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 11 Jun (Eric Soehren) was a good count for June.

Common Merganser: Evidence of breeding in the NC mountains was found again this year when a hen, probably the same individual seen there with a drake 24 Apr (Paul Carroll), was seen with six juveniles on the Tuskasegee River near Dillsboro, Jackson Co, NC, 9 Jun (Marion & Terence Schiefer). Also, a hen was seen flying down the Little Tennessee River at Needmore Game Land, Swain Co, NC, 7 Jun (Jeremy Hyman).

Red-breasted Merganser: Of the dozen or so that lingered along the Carolina coast this summer, a hen seen from the Bulls Island Ferry, Charleston Co, SC, 7 Jul (Jeff Kline, David McLean) remained the latest.

White-winged Dove: Individuals were seen at four sites in NC this summer—in Buxton, Dare Co, 13 Jun (Martin Sneary); at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, 17 Jun (Peggy Eubank, et al.); in Wrightsville Beach, New Hanover Co, where photographed, 30 Jun (Dave Hart); and at a feeder near Lilesville, Anson Co, for two days in early July (Claire Dayton).

Common Nighthawk: One seen performing its aerial display over a section of the Croatan National Forest near Havelock, Craven Co, NC, 25 Jun (John Fussell) was unusual for that area. Fussell believes the nighthawk's presence was due to the area having been burned two weeks prior, temporarily providing bare ground.

Black Rail: Along NC-12 at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, NC, two were heard calling 9 Jun (John Fussell) and one was heard calling 26 Jun (Fussell, et al.). Individuals were also heard calling at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, SC, 4 Jun (Matt Malin, Mark Vukovich) and 7 Jul (Dennis Forsythe); and at North Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 10 Jul (Jeri Smart, Christine Stoughton-Root).

King Rail: One heard at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 4 Jun through 10 Jul, and four heard there 19 Jun (John Fussell) were unusual for that site, probably related to the above-average rainfall in May and June that created wetter habitat.

Black-necked Stilt: Eight were on territory along the 3.7 mile barrier strand southeast of the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 9 Jun (John Fussell).

American Avocet: 12 photographed at Cane Creek Park, Union Co, NC, 26 Jul (George Andrews) were the first for that county. Individuals photographed at Badin Lake, Stanly Co, NC, 7 Jul (Kevin Airington) and at Jordan Lake, Chatham Co, NC, 27 Jul (Jill Paul, Mark Kosiewski, m. obs.) were also good finds for those inland sites.

Wilson's Plover: Eight territorial pairs along the 3.7 mile barrier strand southeast of the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 9 Jun (John Fussell) was a nice total for that "inland shoreline."

Piping Plover: One on the barrier strand near the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 31 Jul (John Fussell, et al.) was unusual for that site away from the ocean.

Upland Sandpiper: One photographed at the Oakland Plantation Turf Farm, Bladen Co, NC, 12 Jul (Marty Wall) was a nice surprise. Up to four were seen in the grassy areas around Wilmington International Airport, New Hanover Co, NC, 16 Jul (Sam Cooper) into August (m. obs.).

Long-billed Curlew: A report of four at Lookout Bight, Carteret Co, NC, 4 Jul (Ann Brice) would tie NC's record high count if accurate.

Hudsonian Godwit: One at the new inlet just south of South Pond, Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, where photographed, 16-17 Jul (Jeff Lewis, m. obs.) was rather early.

Red-necked Phalarope: An adult female photographed at Dobbins Farm in Townville, Anderson Co, SC, 2 Jun (Scott Adams, m. obs.) was a fantastic find for that inland site.

South Polar Skua: One seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 24 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.) was the summer's only sighting.

Pomarine Jaeger: One photographed on the beach at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 17 Jun (Michael Gosselin) may have been sick or injured.

Parasitic Jaeger: An adult was seen feeding just offshore of Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, 1 Jun (Sam Cooper).

Bonaparte's Gull: An immature gull seen and photographed in a yard in

Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 21-22 Jun (Kate Sutherland) was quite unusual for the summer period.

Noddy species: A noddy, most likely a Brown Noddy, was briefly seen in flight over a streak of Sargassum about 30 miles off of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, during a pelagic trip 5 Jun (Kate Sutherland, et al.). It's been over a decade since the previous sighting of a noddy in NC.

Caspian Tern: One photographed over Cane Creek Lake, Union Co, NC, 28 Jul (George Andrews) was somewhat unusual for that relatively small body of water.

Roseate Tern: Individuals were photographed on the beach at Fort Macon SP, Carteret Co, NC, 22 Jun (Nick Bonomo, et al.); at Cape Point, Dare Co, NC, 24 Jun (Michael Gosselin); and from the beach in Corolla, Currituck Co, NC, 15 Jul (Manuel Morales).

White-tailed Tropicbird: On pelagic trips out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, individuals were seen 2 Jul and 16 Jul, and three tropicbirds were seen 21 Jul (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Red-throated Loon: One photographed at Murrells Inlet, Huntington Beach SP, Georgetown Co, SC, 1 Jun (Eric Elvert) was late to depart.

Black-capped Petrel: A sick or injured individual was photographed on the beach near Avon, Dare Co, NC, 4 Jun (Adair McNear).

Great Shearwater: 175, about 150 of which were part of two large "beehive" feeding flocks of tubenoses, seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 25 Jun (Brian Patteson, et al.) was a notable count.

European Storm-Petrel: One seen during a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare



Black-necked Stilt, 8 July 2016, Carteret Co, NC. Photo by Greg Perry.

Co, NC, 29 Jul (Brian Patteson, et al.) was later in the season than all previous sightings off the North Carolina coast.

Magnificent Frigatebird: Sightings included an immature bird photographed off Lighthouse Inlet Heritage Preserve, Charleston Co, SC, 3 Jun (Lacy & Russell Johnson); one off the south end of Pawleys Island, Georgetown Co, SC, 6 Jun (Nancy Devine); two immature birds off Figure Eight Island, New Hanover Co, NC, 11 Jun (Derb Carter); an immature bird photographed between Avon and Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 12 Jun (Michael Gosselin); an immature bird photographed off the Core Banks, Carteret Co, NC, 14 Jun (Tully Hochhausler); an immature bird photographed off Folly Beach, Charleston Co, SC, 16 Jun (Jay Wherley); and an adult female off Nags Head, Dare Co, NC, 5 Jul (Jason Weller).

Brown Booby: The individual found on Lookout Shoals Lake, border of Catawba Co and Iredell Co, NC, in late May, continued in that area throughout the summer (m. obs.). One was also seen on a pelagic trip out of Hatteras, Dare Co, NC, 15 Jul (Brian Patteson, et al.).

Anhinga: Individuals photographed at Fants Grove WMA, Anderson Co, SC, 25-29 Jul (Kevin Kubach) and at Cane Creek Park, Union Co, NC, 26 Jul (George Andrews) were unusual for those sites in the Piedmont.

American White Pelican: One lingered at Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, until 24 Jun (Susan Campbell). 27 photographed at Santee Coastal Reserve, Charleston Co, SC, 15 Jun (James Hausman, et al.) was nice for the summer.

Least Bittern: 62 at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, NC, 3 Jul, was a remarkable count, possibly the highest ever made in North Carolina. Of that total, 21 were seen along NC-12 (John Fussell) and 41 were seen while kayaking along the John Day Ditch canal (Steve Howell).

Reddish Egret: One continuing from late May on a spoil island in the Pamlico Sound near the Ocracoke Ferry Terminal, Hyde Co, NC, 10 Jun (Matt Janson, et al.) and 20 Jun (Jamie Adams) was our northern-most sighting. A very pale immature egret spent several weeks around Mason Inlet, New Hanover Co, NC, where it was seen and photographed by many, 26 Jun (Dave Hart) through 16 Jul (Sam Cooper).

Black-crowned Night-Heron: A juvenile photographed on the Watauga River near Valle Crucis, Watauga Co, NC, 17 Jul (Shellie Karaus) was unusual for that area of NC.

Roseate Spoonbill: A few of the higher counts at sites along the southern SC coast were 12 at Shammy Creek Landing, Beaufort Co, 9-12 Jun (Buddy Campbell); 33 at Bear Island WMA, Colleton Co, 10 Jun (Tom Riley); 16 at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, 24 Jun (Campbell); 37 at a known roost site on Johns Island, Charleston Co, 24 Jun (Jake Zadik); and 17 on Kiawah Island, Charleston Co, 2 Jul (Juliana Smith).

Swallow-tailed Kite: Several impressive counts were made in the vicinity of Lock & Dam No. 1, along the Cape Fear River in southeastern Bladen

Co, NC—17 over a field along NC-87 near Zara, 8 Jun (Jan Hansen); 12 in a pine tree along the river about two and a half miles upstream of the dam, 28 Jun (John Carpenter); and 17 around the dam itself, 16 Jul (Marty Wall). Eight over a solar farm just south of Maxton, Robeson Co, NC, 18 Jul (Ric Lawson) were noteworthy. The high count over agricultural fields in Allendale Co, SC, was 100 on 21 Jul (Buddy Campbell). Outside of the species' typical range were individuals over North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, 4 Jun (John Fussell, et al.); over Salvo, Dare Co, NC, 8 Jun (Michael Gosselin); over Pea Island NWR, Dare Co, NC, 6 Jul (Audrey Whitlock); and over Gunter Rd, Greenville Co, SC, 16 Jul (Joan Baker, et al.).

Mississippi Kite: A pair successfully nested near Taylors, Greenville Co, SC, where two adults were seen tending to a nest with at least one juvenile, in June and July (m. obs.). One seen on a BBS route in Currituck Co, NC, 4 Jun (Jeff Lewis) was a first for that observer on that route.

Northern Harrier: An adult female was seen at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, NC, on multiple dates in June and July (Steve Howell, John Fussell, et al.), though breeding at that site was not detected this year. One over agricultural fields adjacent to Schenck Forest, Wake Co, NC, 23 Jul (Lynn Erla Beegle, et al.) was likely an early fall arrival.

Cooper's Hawk: Breeding was suspected on Collington Island, Dare Co, NC, again this year, as two juveniles were seen during the summer (Jeff Lewis).

Barn Owl: Locally unusual was one seen along NC-12 at Cedar Island NWR, Carteret Co, NC, 28 Jun (Marty Wall) and a moribund individual found along NC-12 near the Bodie Island Lighthouse, Dare Co, NC, 23 Jul (Jeff Lewis). Successful nesting took place in agricultural areas of Anderson Co, SC, 20 Jun (Michael Robertson, et al.) and Chesterfield Co, SC, 28 Jun (Ryan Lubbers).



Black-crowned Night-Heron, 10 June 2016, Charleston Co, SC.

Photo by David Youngblood.



White Ibis, 6 July 2016, Carteret Co, NC. Photo by Greg Perry.

Northern Saw-whet Owl: Chicks fledged from occupied owl boxes at the three different sites in the NC mountains in June—two in the Balsam Mountains, Haywood Co, 7-8 Jun; three along the Pisgah Ridge, Transylvania Co, 7-12 Jun; and three at Mt Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, 20-23 Jun (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal).

Crested Caracara: North Carolina's first Crested Caracara was a juvenile bird seen and photographed by many near the old site of the Cape Hatteras Lighthouse in Buxton, Dare Co, NC, 17 Jun (Michael Gosselin) through 12 Jul (Karen Lebing).

Peregrine Falcon: This species successfully bred on a rock ledge at Devil's Courthouse, Transylvania Co, NC, again this year, with an adult seen tending to two juveniles, 4 Jun (George Ivey, et al.).

Nanday Parakeet: The released exotic marked its seventh anniversary of residence in downtown Morehead City, Carteret Co, NC, in late July (John Fussell, m. obs.).

Alder Flycatcher: A couple of the better counts were five at Black Balsam Knob, Haywood Co, NC, 20 Jul (Lucas Bobay, Sam Jolly) and four+ on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, NC, throughout the period (Rick Knight). Singing males were locally unusual at Meat Camp Creek ESA, Watauga Co, NC, 27 May (Josh Southern) through 10 Jul (Steven Howell); at Mt Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, NC, 3-4 Jun (Marilyn Westphal); and near Piney Creek, Alleghany Co, NC, at about 2800 feet above sea level, 7 Jun (Merrill Lynch).

Gray Kingbird: Only one was found this summer, an individual that lingered around Lighthouse Inlet Heritage Preserve, Charleston Co, SC, 18 Jun (Carl & Cathy Miller) through 9 Jul (Charles Donnelly, et al.).

Scissor-tailed Flycatcher: This species successfully nested again this year atop a utility pole along Gunter Rd in Greenville Co, SC, as an adult male and



Swallow-tailed Kite, 8 June 2016, Bladen Co, NC. Photo by Jan Hansen.

an adult female were seen with two juveniles in July (m. obs.). Interestingly, as many as five flycatchers were reported at the site, the fifth being either a second adult female or an immature male.

Tree Swallow: At least five pairs nested in bluebird boxes in Dare Co, NC, this summer (Jeff Lewis).

Cliff Swallow: 66+ were seen around 40 active nests under two bridges over the Trent River in New Bern, Craven Co, NC, 10 Jun (Sam Cooper).

Ruby-crowned Kinglet: One seen and heard singing at Clingman's Dome, Swain Co, NC, 3 Jul (Nate Swick) was very unusual for the summer period.

Hermit Thrush: This species continues to increase as a summer resident in appropriate habitat in the higher altitudes of the NC mountains. Four active nests were found along the Bald Knob Ridge Trail in the southern tip of Yancey Co, between 6 Jun and 25 Jul (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal, et al.). Another active nest was found on the western side of Mt Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, 3 Jun (Simpson, Westphal). Some notable counts included a total of 68 singing birds during the Black Mountains Spring Bird Count, during the last week of May (*fide* Simpson, Westphal); 11 singing males along Wilson Boundary Rd in Yancey Co, 4 Jun (Doug Johnston, Simon Thompson); six near Clingman's Dome, Swain Co, 19 Jun (Chris Welsh); five, four of which were singing, at Grandfather Mountain SP in Avery Co, 2 Jul (Teddy Wilcox, et al.); eight near Devil's Courthouse, Transylvania Co, 3 Jul (Simpson, Westphal); four, three of which were singing, at Grandfather Mountain SP near the border of Caldwell Co and Watauga Co, 9 Jul (Wilcox); and three or four on Roan Mountain, throughout the period (Rick Knight). Unusual for northern forest habitat were four singing in the Great Craggy Mountains, Buncombe Co, at least 5000 feet above sea level, in May and June (Simpson, Westphal); one singing on Sugar Mountain, Avery Co, at about 4700 feet above sea level, 6



Crested Caracara, 18 June 2016, Dare Co, NC. Photo by Jeff Lewis.

Jun (Chris Kelly); and three at Pond Mountain Game Land, Ashe Co, between 4400 and 4900 feet above sea level, 10 Jun (Kelly).

Cedar Waxwing: There were multiple reports of waxwings lingering into June at sites scattered across the Carolinas. Successful nesting took place at SCE&G Park, at the north end of the dam on Lake Murray, Lexington Co, SC, where adults were seen building a nest 7 Jun, and then feeding two fledglings 11 Jul (Irvin Pitts). Nest-building was observed in a longleaf pine in northern Brunswick Co, NC, 31 May (John Carpenter); in cypress trees at Campbell Lake, Chesterfield Co, SC, 5 Jun (Bill Stokes); along the boardwalk on Wildlife Drive at Pee Dee NWR, Anson Co, NC, 6 Jun (Matt Janson, et al.); and on a BBS route in Jones Co, NC, 11 Jun (Rich Boyd, Wade Fuller).

Red Crossbill: A few of the higher counts made in the NC mountains were eight along Wilson Boundary Rd in Yancey Co, 4 Jun (Doug Johnston, Simon Thompson); eight at Grandfather Mountain SP in Avery Co, 27 Jun (William Johnson); 13 along the Bald Knob Ridge Trail, Yancey Co, 30 Jun (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal); eight at Devil's Courthouse, Transylvania Co, 1 Jul (Simpson); nine on Mt Sterling Ridge, Haywood Co, 3 Jul (Robert & Stacy Johnson); and 22 at Mt Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, 29 Jul (Jamie Adams).

Pine Siskin: A few of the higher counts made in the NC mountains this summer were 11 along Wilson Boundary Rd, Yancey Co, 4 Jun (Doug Johnston, Simon Thompson); 13 on Beech Mountain in Avery Co, 6 Jun (Cathy & Thomas McNeil); 12 at Grandfather Golf and Country Club, Avery Co, 23 Jun (William Johnson); and ten at Clingman's Dome, Swain Co, 30 Jun (John Thornton).

American Redstart: One seen on Roanoke Island, Dare Co, NC, 16 Jul (Jeff



Gray Kingbird, 02 July 2016, Charleston Co, SC. Photo by Pam Ford.

Lewis) was likely an early migrant.

Magnolia Warbler: Potential breeders in the NC mountains included a singing male along the Tanawha Trail in Avery Co, 1 Jun (Lauren Lampley); one singing male along the Cragway Trail at Grandfather Mountain SP in Watauga Co, 8 Jul (Clifton Avery); and three to five singing males on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, throughout the period (Rick Knight, m. obs.).

Palm Warbler: One on Bulls Island, Cape Romain NWR, Charleston Co, SC, 22 Jul (David McLean) was a very early fall migrant.

Yellow-rumped Warbler: Suggestive of attempted breeding in the NC mountains was one singing male on Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, 9 Jun (Arch McCallum) and 14 Jun (Rick Knight); two singing males along the Grandfather Trail at Grandfather Mountain SP in Avery Co, 27 Jun (William Johnson); and one singing male along the Summit Trail at Mt Mitchell SP, Yancey Co, 28 Jun (Mark Simpson, Marilyn Westphal, et al.).

Vesper Sparrow: Breeding was confirmed at Pond Mountain Game Land, Ashe Co, NC, when a fledgling was seen 2 Jun (Chris Kelly). Other sightings made in the NC mountains included one singing male along NC-93 near Piney Creek, Alleghany Co, at about 2900 feet above sea level, 7 Jun (Merrill Lynch); six at Pond Mountain Game Land, 10 Jun (Kelly); and one or two on Round Bald, Roan Mountain, Mitchell Co, at about 5800 feet above sea level, throughout the period (Rick Knight, m. obs.).

Lark Sparrow: An adult seen and photographed along Howerton Rd in Guilford Co, NC, 21-24 Jul (Marty Wall, m. obs.) was unusual for the summer.

Savannah Sparrow: Five+ were seen at a known breeding site just east of

Piney Creek, Alleghany Co, NC, in an un-mowed hayfield at about 2900 feet above sea level, 7 Jun (Merrill Lynch). For a second year in a row this species was found along Hooper Lane in Henderson Co, NC, in July—this year two were photographed 24 Jul (Simon Thompson), though no evidence of nesting has ever been found at that site.

Song Sparrow: One singing along the barrier strand southeast of the Cedar Island Ferry Terminal, Carteret Co, NC, 9 Jun (John Fussell) was suggestive of attempted breeding there. That area is near the southern limit of the Atlantic subspecies' range.

White-throated Sparrow: After one was heard singing in a wooded area east of the Greenville-Spartanburg International Airport, Spartanburg Co, SC, 13-14 Jun (Josh Arrants), two were heard in the same area, one singing and the other calling, 11 Jul (Arrants). The second report of two birds is the most intriguing, as all previous summer sightings in the Carolinas have been of individuals. One seen amongst House Sparrows inside a Lowes Home Improvement store in Conway, Horry Co, SC, 25 Jun (Chris Hill) probably became trapped inside that building earlier in the year.

Painted Bunting: The adult male with an Indigo Bunting-like song returned to Wilson Educational Forest, Wilson Co, NC, for a second summer in a row, 16 Jun through 9 Jul (Ann Brice, m. obs.). This year it was joined by an adult female for a short period, 29 Jun (David Williams) through 1 Jul (Brice), though no evidence of nesting was found.

Dickcissel: The peak count at North River Preserve (limited access), Carteret Co, NC, this year was 22 singing males on 30 Jun (John Fussell). Dickcissels continued from late spring at sites along Mayo Farm Rd in Martin Co, NC, throughout June (m. obs.), with a high count of four there on 27 Jun (Frank Enders) and along Baldwin Rd in Guilford Co, NC, where up to three were seen throughout the period into August (Marty Wall, m. obs.). Seven, including one recently fledged juvenile, near the intersection of Battleground Rd and Mt Olive Rd in Spartanburg Co, SC, 10 Jun (Pam Ford, et al.) was a good count. Other sightings included one on a BBS route in Camden Co, NC, 5 Jun (Jeff Lewis); two singing males along Old Mountain Rd in western Iredell Co, NC, 5 Jun (Monroe Parnell) through 1 Jul (Jeff Pippen); one singing male at Mackay Island NWR, Currituck Co, NC, 16-20 Jun (Peggy Eubank, m. obs.); a singing male along Blackman Rd, Anderson Co, 20 Jun (Linda Montgomery) through 8 Jul (Scott Davis); two at Savannah NWR, Jasper Co, SC, 3 Jul (Carroll Richard, et al.); and two singing males at Alligator River NWR, Dare Co, NC, 4 Jul (Lewis).

Bobolink: Three singing males in a large un-mowed hayfield just east of Piney Creek, Alleghany Co, NC, at about 2900 feet above sea level, 7 Jun (Merrill Lynch) were thought to be on territory. Nine in an agricultural area along the French Broad River in Dunns Rock, Transylvania Co, NC, 5 Jun (Jerry Griggs) were suggestive of attempted breeding in that area.

CAROLINA BIRD CLUB

www.carolinabirdclub.org

The Carolina Bird Club is a non-profit organization which represents and supports the birding community in the Carolinas through its official website, publications, meetings, workshops, trips, and partnerships, whose mission is

- To promote the observation, enjoyment, and study of birds.
- To provide opportunities for birders to become acquainted, and to share information and experience.
- To maintain well-documented records of birds in the Carolinas.
- To support the protection and conservation of birds and their habitats and foster an appreciation and respect of natural resources.
- To promote educational opportunities in bird and nature study.
- To support research on birds of the Carolinas and their habitats.

Membership is open to all persons interested in the conservation, natural history, and study of wildlife with particular emphasis on birds. Dues, contributions, and bequests to the Club may be deductible from state and federal income and estate taxes. Pay dues or make donations at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/dues/>. Make change of address at <https://www.carolinabirdclub.org/members/profile/>. Send correspondence regarding membership matters to Headquarters Secretary. Answers to questions about the club might be found at <http://www.carolinabirdclub.org/about.html>. Dues include \$6 for subscription to the *CBC Newsletter* and \$7 for subscription to *The Chat*.

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The Chat

Quarterly Bulletin of Carolina Bird Club, Inc.
1809 Lakepark Drive, Raleigh NC 27612



Carolina Bird Club
www.carolinabirdclub.org

Periodicals Postage Paid
at Pinehurst, NC 28374 and
additional mailing offices